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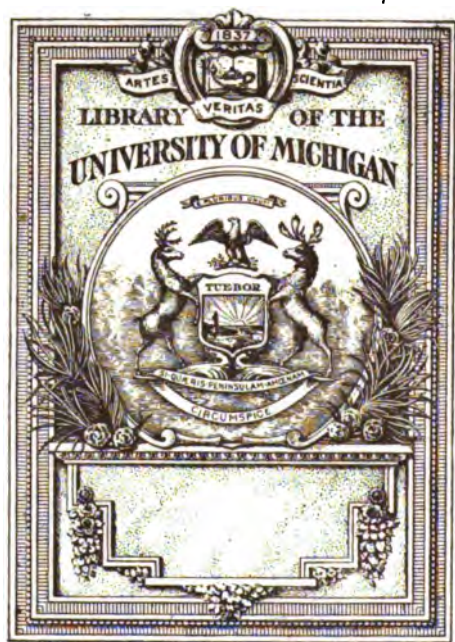
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**A HISTORY  
OF  
THE GREAT WAR  
1914—**



**THE GENESIS OF THE WAR**

**JUNE, 1914—AUGUST, 1915**

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS CAUSES, THE FAILURE OF  
TEMPORIZING POLICIES, AND THE SPIRIT OF THE  
BELLIGERENT PEOPLES; WITH A RECORD OF  
POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC EVENTS**

**BY**

**BRIGGS DAVENPORT**

**G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
NEW YORK AND LONDON  
The Knickerbocker Press**

**1916**

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07 May 15 7-1

## PREFACE

NO experienced reader nor any intelligent thinker needs to be told of the difficulties of writing a history of contemporaneous events which can be worth the while. A certain mental detachment from the passions and prejudices and credulities of the time is primarily necessary. It is not everyone, whatever his other qualities, who possesses the temperament which would make such detachment possible.

The author, in his own case, must leave the reader to judge of this question by the volume which is before him. He is conscious of having undertaken an exacting and delicate task. He hopes that the verdict upon the performance will at least be that it bespeaks honesty and diligence.

It would be impossible for the self-respecting historian absolutely to conceal his sympathies as to the matters which he recounts. This should not mean that he is partisan, any more than is the judge who must form an opinion of the causes before him. The writer of this volume sees faults and errors and crimes to the debit of the contestants on either side of the Great War. He sees, with absolute certainty, he believes, on which side is the

Reclams. Map. 5-5-36

preponderance of wrong, and on which side is the predominance of right. He is proud to feel that it would be impossible for him to write of the Great War without paying his tribute to the Right and without revealing his loathing and his horror of the Wrong.

He will be content if he may be numbered among the most modest of the innumerable authors and publicists who in this most transcendent crisis of the world's life, with an ardour that is of the soul as well as of the mind and heart, have offered their pens in entire devotion to the cause of justice and civilization.

The facts in this history of the *Genesis of the Great War* have been drawn from a thousand sources, always with a thorough endeavour to make sure of their authenticity. The author believes that in this regard he has maintained an entirely impartial mental attitude. The facts, however, may be allowed to speak for themselves. That the reader may not be in any doubt as to the nature of these sources, many notes and citations have been added.

It is due and fitting here that acknowledgment should be made of obligations to the great journals and periodicals of the day in London, Paris, New York, Rome, Turin, Milan, Geneva, and in every capital, in fact, where the press is not the mere creature of political or military authority. Never before were the causes of a war more copiously

## Preface

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exposed in contemporary publications; and yet there remained a great deal concerning those causes which was not readily accessible or had not been plainly stated. The writer would thank the eminent public men of several of the countries engaged in the war from whom he has derived facts and interpretations which have been useful to him in preparing this work.

B. D.

PARIS, November, 1915.





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# **THE GENESIS OF THE GREAT WAR**



## CHAPTER I

### EUROPE IN THE LAST FOUR DECADES—GENERAL AND SPECIFIC CAUSES OF THE WAR

The Two Central Empires most Representative of the Post-Feudal System—Superficial Political Progress—Real Political Backwardness—The Prussian Philosophy of Force—Three Great Motives of Aggression: Desire of Aggrandizement, Impatience of Restriction of Physical Prosperity, and Dread of Retribution for Past Spoliations—Germany's Consuming Longing to Become a "World Power" and to Possess the Primacy of Force on the Sea as well as on Land—Envy of the Colonial Achievements of Other Nations and of their Commercial Development—The "War-Passion"—Readjustments and Evolution of International Relations—Two Principal European Groups finally Formed: the anti-Slavic and the anti-Teutonic—Failure of German Attempts to Bring France again to her Knees and of Austro-Hungarian Efforts to Gain Exclusive Control of the Balkan Peoples—Germany's Use of Austria-Hungary as a Tool to further her own Schemes of Expansion—The Several Crises Brought about by Kaiser Wilhelm's Policy—The Efficacy of the Triple Entente—How Great Britain Came to See that her Interests as Regards Continental Issues Coincide with those of France and Russia—The New Question of the Near-East that Grew out of the Turco-Italian and the Two Balkan Wars.

UNLIKE many other of the great political convulsions in the world's history, the vast struggle of 1914 and 1915 in which Germany and Austria-Hungary, on the one side,

and Russia, Great Britain, and France, on the other, were the principal participants, was not due to any accidental crisis or provocation. The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir-presumptive to the double throne of Austria-Hungary, and his consort, the Duchess of Hohenberg, at Sarajevo, in the province of Bosnia, on the 28th of June, 1914, was neither its direct nor its indirect cause, nor were the so-called pan-Serbian agitation and plotting which preceded that execrable and inexcusable crime more than a plausible pretext for the arrogant and ultra-coercive attitude almost immediately assumed by the government of the Emperor Franz Josef towards the government at Belgrade. The primal germs of this war were of a general character and of much older date.

**Survival of the post-feudal system.** The close of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century saw still existent in Europe two typical remnants of the monarchical system which was built upon the ruins of feudalism. These were the Austrian Empire and the Prussian Kingdom, the latter dominating and virtually absorbing by a gradual process the subsidiary states which constituted with it the later German Empire.

Germany and Austria-Hungary, upon close scrutiny, will be found to have been for a century past the least progressive, in the political sense,

of all the important countries, or agglomerations of nationalities, in Europe, Turkey (whose territory to the north of the Sea of Marmora has been reduced to a negligible quantity) alone excepted. A comparison of this nature is not to be based upon the ostensible form of political institutions so much as upon their spirit and substance. Viewed in this special light, Russia, as regards the political education of her people, has been, since 1861, more progressive than either Germany or Austria-Hungary. It may be admitted that she has not yet reached so high a state of political development as either of those people or groups of peoples; but her strides have been much longer in a given time, and her advance, moreover, is apparently directed towards a much more sincere phase of constitutional government.<sup>1</sup>

**Military absolutism.** Ever since the "Great Elector," Friedrich Wilhelm, Duke of Brandenburg, prepared the way for his son, Friedrich, to crown himself as the first King of Prussia, the nation governed by the Hohenzollerns, except for the short Napoleonic period, has stood as the most consistent living symbol of arbitrary force, armed *cap-à-pie*, in any part of the world. For a greatly longer time, the Hapsburg dynasty in Central Europe has typified the extreme pretensions of kingly and imperial

<sup>1</sup> No more honest and illuminating book on Russia can be read than the very recent one by Maurice Baring, *The Main-Springs of Russia*, written on the very eve of the War of 1914-15.

## 4            Genesis of the Great War

prerogative. In both Germany and Austria-Hungary the monarchical authority has yielded only grudgingly, and for the most part by infinitesimal degrees, to the needs and aspirations of democracy. Although nominally constitutional monarchies, their constitutions leave almost everything to be desired in the way of popular representation. No country can be regarded as really free in which the absolute right of declaring war without the consent or approval of its parliament and of using the armed forces according to his personal pleasure rests either expressly or virtually in the hands of the chief of state. Neither Austria nor Germany has a parliamentary government in the fullest sense. The dictum, however, that a nation in the long lapse of years submits itself to the kind of rulership that is most in accord with its innate spirit, seems to apply with peculiar aptness to the mass of the German and Austro-German peoples. The Berlin parliament is an instrument which the German citizens might have used for the enlargement of their opportunities for self-government, if their united intelligence and will-power had prompted them to it. Instead, the history of the Hohenzollern Empire is clearly that of the steady consolidation and augmentation of a military despotism, tempered hardly, if at all, by the existence of a legislative corps; and this despotism has been developed with the apparently enthusiastic approval of the greater mass



of the people, including those who boast of the highest instruction and the wisest forethought.

In Austria-Hungary, the dynastic element, since the revolutionary impulses of 1848 were repressed, seems to have sought safety, so far as internal political forms are concerned, in what one might almost call inertia; but it has found, of course, that to a living organism inertia is impossible, and to court it most dangerous. A French historian has qualified the character of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy as "archaic, artificial, and useless." Liberalism had long waited upon the death of the aged Franz Josef. The incessant effort to balance against one another the many racial elements of the dual monarchy had as its most marked result in most of them a deep irritation, a smouldering discontent that boded nothing but ill for the future fortunes of the Hapsburg House.

**Aggrandizement by the law of might.** But if the primal germs of the Great War were general, there were also specific causes of far deeper and more intense significance than the crime of Sarajevo.

The growth of the Austrian and the Prussian power was virtually identical in principle and in method. The chief difference lay in the vastly greater military efficiency of Prussia and her more rapid production of wealth, once she had become the dominant member of the German Federacy. Both the Hapsburg and the Hohenzollern dynas-

ties, from the beginning of their rise, seized whatever territory they believed it possible for them to keep. In almost every instance the seizure was without more than a mere colourable title of right. It was thus that little Brandenburg, from the early part of the fifteenth century, grew into the great and blustering Prussia of the nineteenth, which welcomed with brutal joy the inane blunders of the government of Napoleon III. that drew France into an unequal conflict. This conflict ended in the entire discomfiture of France, the welding together of the many German states into the second German Empire, the loss to the French people of Alsace and a great part of Lorraine, the imposition of a penal fine of five billions of francs, and onerous treaty stipulations which made France for more than forty years the prey of German trade chicanery and disloyal competition and of German political and military espionage.

Like the Greeks and Romans, the Prussians owed their early military prestige largely to formations, drill, tactics, and a discipline which in the beginning were peculiarly their own, and the growth of their political power was due chiefly to simple military superiority, and hardly at all to refined statecraft or skilled diplomacy. No other nation so far advanced in intellectual culture ever so frankly avowed its acceptance of the principle that "Might makes right." The history of

Prussia amply demonstrates this fact; but it remained for some of their chief writers of later days to make this principle the thesis of strenuous argumentative demonstration.

**Spoliation of France.** Even if the question of justice is waived, the result of the ruthless spoliation of France in 1870-71 is the most practical refutation that could be given of the policy of making mere power on the part of a nation a criterion of its conduct towards a neighbour, animated though it may be by passions that have been roused by an exasperating war. Bismarck himself was opposed to exacting a territorial sacrifice from France. He knew that the wound thus made in the breast of a proud and sentimental people would not heal except under the balm of bitter revenge. The taking of Alsace-Lorraine, he said to a French diplomatist in August, 1871, "would be an error on our part, if the peace is to be lasting." The consciousness of probable consequences is here revealed; the latent thought that a peace of this kind could not endure. Von Moltke insisted upon the cession of Alsace-Lorraine for the very reason that he foresaw, or believed he foresaw, the further war that was to come after France should have regained her normal strength, and he contended that Germany, unless she were willing to stultify her previous arrogant attitude, would need the strategic positions included in the territory in question to

guard herself against the righteous rancour of an ungenerous settlement.

It was Wilhelm I. who decided the matter, following the advice of his military lieutenant, rather than that of his chief minister. Historical critics have found in this solution an illustration of the arbitrary and cynical temper of the Hohenzollerns. Many episodes of the Great War of 1914-15 were destined to lend apparent corroboration to this opinion.

An **"invincible" war-machine**. It is certain that, ever since Prussia had risen to the rank of a formidable military Power, after the War of 1866, and especially since the re-establishment of an imperial régime in Germany, the governing authority had accustomed the people more and more to the gospel of aggression. It is true that since the Franco-Prussian War this sentiment has been largely cloaked in the formula of readiness for defence, and that this has been the justification constantly put forward for the ever-increasing armament of the Empire. But at the same time in the works of German military writers of deserved authority, and in the Reichstag itself, the importance of striking the first blow in the event of war being imminent was emphasized over and over again with all possible force. In the later years a constant militarist agitation was carried on with the purpose of fanning German love for the Fatherland into a warlike passion. For centuries past,

the ambition of nearly all the Prussian rulers had been to make of Germany an invincible war-machine, a part of its elements feeding, equipping, and otherwise sustaining the other part, whose sole function should be to fight. This polity was to endure as long as the nation stood in need, or its leaders believed that it stood in need, of expansion at the expense of its neighbours. Even if no check had been put upon this essentially provocative system, could a greedy nation ever have declared itself satisfied, and would it ever have voluntarily relieved the other peoples of the earth of the menace of its egoism? It is the confessed foible of human nature that greed never finds a sufficiency.

**Germany's intensive growth.** The War of 1870 was desired by the Bismarckian government for the unification of Germany under the Prussian hegemony and by the Germans as a nation as the first long step towards the fulfilment of their larger destiny. After that had been accomplished, there remained the even greater task of consolidating and developing Germany's power in every sense of that term. Her military strength was to be increased, instead of being temporarily diminished for reasons of economy and recuperation, as is usually the case with a nation that has been overwhelmingly successful in war. Her productive resources of population and material were to be employed to the fullest advantage. The course of intensive

industrial exploitation and development upon which she entered carried with it the necessity of a rapid and immense augmentation of her means of marketing her goods abroad. One of these was a merchant-marine of her own, the growth of which was stimulated in every possible way. Another means was the political and economic domination of alien populations, chiefly barbarous or semi-barbarous; in other words the upbuilding of a colonial system, in tardy emulation of Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, Britain, and Belgium.

**Bismarck and colonial expansion.** Bismarck appears to have been less far-seeing as to the probable development of the German nation than many of his contemporaries. He counselled those who governed France to seek a renewal of her strength and of her wealth, which had been subjected to so heavy a drain in the War of 1870, and the gratification of the patriotic pride of her people, in colonial activities; the plain inference being that Germany would be indifferent to whatever advances France might make in this respect so long as she did nothing to injure Germany's established interests. The Iron Chancellor's course at this point bore a marked resemblance to that which he had pursued towards Austria after the War of 1866, when, to placate her, he prescribed a policy of expansion in the basin of the Danube and towards the Balkans. In that

instance, also, he wisely opposed the appropriation of any of the beaten enemy's territory, and succeeded in bringing the Prussian King to his way of thinking. Then, as afterwards, he had the fear of an unsleeping motive of vengeance; and he thought that to engage elsewhere the energies of his country's late antagonist would serve as a guarantee, at least for some years to come, against a renewal of the quarrel. Tonkin, Annam, Madagascar, Tunis, the Congo, and Morocco are all evidence that he miscalculated, in the case of France, the practical effects of the hint which he officiously proffered to her statesmen.

**The Southern Slavs misjudged.** Bismarck's general attitude was no more remarkable, as to colonial aggrandizement, than it was as to the future of the Balkan peoples. He considered the question of the Near-East to be worthy of diplomatic attention only in so far as it might affect the immediate interrelations of the great European Powers. At the Berlin Congress, which undid the Treaty of San Stefano after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, he showed plainly his utter disdain of the Slavs of Southern Europe, who have since so well proved their marvellous virility and their indomitable patriotic ambition. In giving *carte blanche* to France to extend her colonial system, and in treating with contemptuous indifference the national spirit of the Balkan peoples, he failed to recognize two of the most decisive causes of the

future miscarriage of German hopes of world-domination.

**Naval armament and world-dominion.** Intensive industrial growth and broad commercial and colonial extension had as their inevitable corollary the creation of a formidable navy. Already for three decades Germany had maintained against continental Europe the standing menace of an excessive land-armament. Now, about 1900, she entered upon what was practically a challenge to all the world, but most of all to Britain, by beginning to give effect to the colossal project of marine armament which Wilhelm II. and the successors of Bismarck had evolved. Nearly ten years before that, the Kaiser had marked his desire to launch into new fields of policy by his abrupt dismissal of the Iron Chancellor, who had been the strongest aid to his grandfather, the first Emperor, in the unification and consolidation of Germany. But the astounding naval undertaking was the first clear indication of the real magnitude of German hopes and resolves.

Germany aimed to become what in modern political language is called a "World Power." The purpose was laudable if the means to be employed were worthy and if there was no overweening desire to assume an undue preponderance in the world's affairs. There was the critical point. Many facts and deductions tended to prove that Germany's ultimate object was not only to sup-



plant Britain, but to excel not only her but all other Powers in the mastery of the seas and in the extent of her dominions. With the primacy of force thus secured, both in Europe and on the ocean, she would be ready to cast the blight of her armed arrogance upon other continents as well, with the aim of being relatively stronger in the modern world than Rome was in the ancient. This splendid dream, while the natural fruit of the German temperament and the logical sequel of the German practice of the precept that "Might makes right," might have been longer in reaching the stage of exact definition if a prince of a less theatrical disposition and of a less Machiavellian spirit than Wilhelm II. had succeeded the amiable and liberal-minded Friedrich I., who unfortunately lived but three months after the death in 1888 of Wilhelm I.

**Personal influence of Wilhelm II. upon his people.** The influence of the personality of Wilhelm II. upon his people may be thus stated: It tended throughout the whole of his reign to aggravate those traits of the German nature and mentality which are least agreeable to the rest of mankind. He embodied in himself in some degree the best, and in greater measure the worst, characteristics of his dynastic race. It has even been held by some observers who have had opportunities of studying him close at hand that his mind and his nervous system were never entirely

normal. In a memorable speech, in September, 1914, Lloyd George, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, made allusion to this view in the following words: "Lunacy is always distressing, but sometimes it is dangerous; and when it is manifested in the head of a great empire it is about time that it should be ruthlessly put away."

**Hatred bred from conscious wrong.** A nation can not with impunity accept the burden of a reproachful conscience. It is this that for years kept Prussia and the states affiliated with her in constant fear of reprisals after she had disrupted the old German Confederation and had forced Austria to hold herself aloof from Germanic affairs. It is this that for years gave Germany no rest from the dread of French vengeance. Bismarck, with all his perspicacity and political authority, and still less his successors, were unable to moderate Prussian pride of conquest or to lessen Prussian apprehension of a just retribution. It is the unsteady balance of these two motives that has in the last four decades so frequently imparted to German external policies a puzzling aspect of uncertainty and inconsistency. German statesmanship nevertheless laboured steadily, if not always logically or wisely, to remove the causes of external danger to the Empire and to advance its special aims. The prompt and almost marvelous manifestations of revived and recuperative

energy on the part of the French people were met with the renewed menace of war.

**Renewed menace of war in 1875.** Bismarck declared that the French armament, reconstituted since 1871, was excessive, and that in particular the fortifying of Nancy, although not forbidden in the Frankfort Treaty, must cease. It was only the intervention of Russia, seconded by Britain, that induced Germany for the time to forego the rôle of bully towards her late antagonist. From that moment her aversion for England became more and more marked. It has since blossomed into the most consummate international hatred of modern times. Bismarck, when he saw himself checkmated, strove to dissimulate his abandoned purpose, and affected a vast deal of virtuous indignation because the British Government had affirmed its conviction that Germany had determined to attack France. It is a curious coincidence that, on this occasion, the false reproach of double dealing and of diplomatic treachery was uttered against England, even Victoria, the venerated Queen, being named in connection with it, just as Wilhelm II. in 1914, was to complain of a disloyal and unexpected attack by a nation which Germany until then had believed to be her very good friend. The attitude of Russia also invited the increased animosity of Germany.

**Dread of hostile coalitions.** Bismarck, from this time on, was haunted, according to his own sub-

sequent avowals, by the dread of coalitions hostile to the new Empire. He must have been aware that the arrogant politico-military spirit of Germany was already creating distrust and dislike on the part of nearly all the Powers. It was then that he began to lay the foundations of the Triple Alliance.

**Constantinople and the route to India.** Austria-Hungary had hitherto cultivated very neighbourly relations with Russia, although the latter was well aware that it was Austria, with the backing of Britain, who stood most in her path in her effort to dominate the Balkan peoples and finally to attain to Constantinople. Austria had long served as a brake upon the natural political evolution of those peoples, and, so long as England continued to be intensely jealous of the Russian development to the southward, she regarded Austria as a valuable ally in the protection of British interests, both in the Near-East and in Asia: for to keep Russia away from the Mediterranean was almost as important as to prevent her from encroaching upon the border states of India. At the same time, Italy, under Crispi, was regarded as a moderator of the French power in the Mediterranean, which had gained an increased significance through the opening of the Suez Canal. Germany was naturally glad to see Britain, rather than France, in control of Egyptian affairs, and she made with the former in 1893 what might

be termed a tentative partition<sup>1</sup> of East Africa. Italy obeyed English suggestion in her African enterprises, after she had entered the alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, thus lessening Britain's risk in the seizure of the Upper Nile and the Soudan. Further marks of the latter's pacific temper and of her supposed leaning towards Germany at this epoch were the short-sighted cession of the latter under the Salisbury ministry of the island of Heligoland, off the mouth of the River Elbe, commanding the North Sea entrance to the then uncompleted Kiel Canal, and the co-operation of the two Powers in China, after the Nippo-Chinese War, in opposition to Russian pretensions.

**Austria and Russia in the Balkans.** Meanwhile, before the formation of the Triple Alliance, Austria had found it prudent to effect an understanding with Russia as to the claims of each to exercise a special influence in the Balkans. The frequently recurring outrages and acts of fearful cruelty on the part of Turkey in her European provinces had kept Russian opinion for many years in a state of ever-increasing exasperation. The Emperors of Russia and Austria-Hungary had met at Reichstadt in 1876. It was agreed between

<sup>1</sup> The British Government, however, stipulated that it should hold all the more important strategic points on the littoral of the territories which it was expected that Portugal would one day be willing to cede.

them that the former should have as "sphere of influence" the eastern provinces of the Balkan Peninsula, comprising the greater part of the Slav population, and the latter the western.<sup>1</sup> It was largely on the faith of this arrangement and of what it implied, that Russia ventured, after a new insurrection had raged for some time in Bosnia, to make war upon Turkey, in 1877, ostensibly to free the southern Slavs, but really in order to seize the seeming opportunity, so long awaited and which had so often proved elusive, to obtain an outlet upon the Mediterranean or the Ægean Sea. But the magnificent success of Russia, at the cost of appalling sacrifices, was too sweeping not to awaken, on the part not only of Austria-Hungary, in spite of her previous amicable understanding with Russia, but also of Germany and Britain, an instant and stern opposition to the garnering of its fruits, which should have been signalized by a triumphant occupation of Constantinople. A prudent respect for the military power of those three nations caused Russia to stop her victorious advance at San Stefano, when she saw almost the whole of Turkey-in-Europe within her grasp, and even the treaty of peace which she there made with her stricken foe was not allowed to stand.

<sup>1</sup> "Austria got from Russia the promise of Bosnia and Herzegovina in return for her neutrality in the Turco-Russian War."—GIBBONS, *The New Map of Europe*. This statement is, perhaps, too categorical.

This was the second time within the century that a Russian army had gone thus far and had then relinquished what destiny had seemed to mark as its ultimate gain.

**Bungling work of the Berlin Congress.** The great Slavic Power, however, suffered an even more serious mortification when the Berlin Congress, guided by Bismarck and Beaconsfield, gave license to Austria-Hungary to occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, a quasi-provisional measure which in a few years inevitably assumed a permanent character. As has been justly remarked, this in effect was to create a Slavic Alsace-Lorraine in the Balkans, a wound that could be healed only by heroic remedies, when the opportune moment should come. Instead of settling in clear terms the Turco-Balkan question, the Berlin Treaty of 1879 left the door wide ajar for future trouble for all the parties concerned. Nevertheless, it was of this peace that Beaconsfield boasted that it was obtained with the accompaniment of honour.

This bitter check to Russia was far-reaching in its consequences. It had much to do with the closer rapprochement of Germany and Austria-Hungary, who came to realize more than ever at the Congress of Berlin how far certain interests were common to them both; and these two events were undoubtedly the final factors in determining Russia to withdraw her confidence from the Hapsburg Government, to whose gratitude she had

justly esteemed herself entitled for her intervention, in 1848, which had saved the badly shaken monarchy from the loss of Hungary.<sup>1</sup> The ultimate effect was to cause Russia to draw near to France and at last to form with her the intimate alliance which was destined to hold Germany in check while Russia, after the disaster of 1904, devoted herself to the work of military and economic upbuilding. Germany, in 1879, had obtruded herself between Russia and Austria, for the latter's advantage and as her own safeguard against the excessive extension of the Muscovite power in Europe. But, as a matter of fact, Germany felt that on the one hand her national unity was still menaced by that power, while on the other, in spite of the implied liberty accorded to France to take possession of Tunis, the resentment to which the spoliation of 1871 had given birth was stronger than ever. Henceforth, also, the popular hatred between Russia and Germany and Russia and Austria waxed apace.

The history of the next thirty-five years in Europe, therefore, is that of a more and more distinct crystallization of the interests of the various governments and nationalities into two predominant groups, the anti-Slavic and the anti-German. Germany's consciousness of her own overweening ambitions, and of the then un-

<sup>1</sup> The German and Austrian Kaisers had an interview at Salzburg, October 7, 1879.



avowable designs to which they gave rise, impelled her to look with ever-increasing suspicion and jealousy upon the three other great nations whom she knew to be beyond the scope of her possible domination, Russia, France, and Britain—at least until the question of relative strength should be settled by a tremendous world-war. As the lode-stone swings towards the North, so the national instinct of the Russians turned always towards the virtual political and economic unity of the Slav peoples, whether under one general sovereignty or in a loose association which might assume the form of a federation. The logic of events, although not perceived of all, had clearly designated Russia and France, as it had Germany and Austria, respectively, as suitable allies.

**Estrangement of France and Italy.** Italy, forgetful of her debt of gratitude to France for the latter's share in her liberation, brooding over French protection accorded to the Pope's temporal sovereignty and resenting the alienation of Nice and Savoy, which Napoleon III. had exacted in exchange for his support of Victor Emmanuel against Austria, was roused to further antipathy by the eager activity of the Third Republic in pursuing her programme of rapid colonial enlargement. The relations of Italy and France, in 1880, were greatly strained by the latter's establishment of her protectorate over Tunis, the first great step taken by Jules Ferry as *premier ministre* in con-

formity to the hint received from Bismarck at the Berlin Congress. It is very probable that the Iron Chancellor hoped perfidiously that the new colonial policy of France would embroil her in one quarter or another, and he may even have foreseen the contingency of a rupture with Italy and have counted upon it for the furtherance of Germany's own designs. Italy herself had been watching for the opportunity to gain virtual control of Tunis, and her disappointment was rancorous and deep. She easily fell, therefore, into the German net, and became the third partner in the anti-Slav and anti-French coalition, notwithstanding that her people and her statesmen, for the most part, retained to the full the traditional hatred of Austria, her former oppressor. This hatred was reciprocated by Austria, who had never forgiven either Italy or France for the loss of Lombardy and Venetia. An Austrian statesman, recalling the saying of Mary Tudor, Queen of England, in reference to Calais, declared that he was sure that if Franz Josef's heart were to be opened, after his death, there would be found written within it the word "Venetia."

Italy's fundamental and permanent interests did not lie with the Triple Alliance. That she joined it so readily was a flattering triumph for the tortuous, but not dextrous, diplomacy of Bismarck. But it was likewise due in no small degree to her fear of Austria. Bismarck counted also upon the

support of Britain, Austria's steadfast friend, a friendship which had been strikingly illustrated at the Berlin Congress. When the Triple Alliance was consummated, German diplomacy flattered itself that it was already mistress of Europe. But therein it was guilty of a fatuous and most characteristic self-deception. Britain was desirous of maintaining the equilibrium of foreign influences in the Balkans. The Triple Alliance threatened to destroy this forever to the immediate advantage of Austria-Hungary, and ultimately to that of Germany, for her purpose to make Turkey first her tool and then her victim was in a few years to become only too patent. Meanwhile the Hapsburg House continued to nurse the splendid hope of one day annexing to its Empire the whole of the Balkan Peninsula. The Archduke Rudolf, on a visit to Constantinople, exclaimed to his wife, the Archduchess Stephanie: "Thou shalt be Empress here!"

**Germany's diplomatic duplicity.** The Triple Alliance strengthened the prestige of Germany and doubled the military forces of which she would probably be able to dispose in the event of a great war; but still it did not give her the full security which Bismarck deemed indispensable until she should have developed her own latent power to the highest point. He, therefore, courted anew the confidence of Russia, and was so far successful, temporarily, that, in September, 1884,

he induced the Tsar's government to sign a treaty with Germany, pledging each of the parties to a "benevolent neutrality," if the other were to be attacked by a third. This Bismarck called his "treaty of reassurance." Its ambiguous wording was meant to deceive both St. Petersburg and Vienna. Russia, however, was not wholly the dupe of his cynical hypocrisy. Interrogated by Gortschakoff, the Tsar's minister, so long ago as 1876, Bismarck had been obliged to confess that, if there were war between the Muscovite and the Austrian Empire, Germany would adhere to the latter. Russia, not forgetting this response, could not but see that it was still as much as ever the interest of Germany to sustain the strange political anomaly known as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, so long as the latter could serve to hold the final solution of the Near-East question in suspense. The "treaty of reassurance" expired at the end of three years and was not renewed, either then, or later, under Caprivi.

**Advent of Wilhelm II.** The advent of Wilhelm II. to the throne changed the complexion of German politics both at home and abroad. The new Kaiser and the successors of Bismarck did not unite conservatism with positive force in the same proportions that the latter had done. They desired that Germany should move, not with normal, but with abnormal strides, towards the first rank as a "World Power"; they submitted only momen-

tarily to moderating influences and they proceeded with the augmentation of the land and sea forces with greater and greater contempt of the just umbrage which this course might provoke on the part of Russia, France, and Britain. The characteristic of bellicose arrogance became more and more obtrusive.

Nevertheless, Germany continued her alternate course of bluster and of diplomatic cajolery, wherever she believed that it might be effective. To mollify Russia, Wilhelm II. encouraged her expansion in Asia, imitating in this Bismarck's attitude as to the French colonial projects. He hoped that the gratification of Russia's ambition in the Far-East would keep her for the time being from brooding upon the barring of her advance to the *Ægean* Sea. Japan, however, was also feeling the impulse towards a wider activity. She viewed with rising anger the attempted intrusion of a western Power in what she considered her own sphere of influence in Northern China. It was largely to forestall the Russians that, in 1894, she entered upon a successful war against China, in order to impose her suzerainty upon Korea and to obtain increased privileges in the Chinese markets. The result was a check to the Asiatic policy of both the Tsar and the Kaiser; but it gave the latter an opportunity which he did not neglect. Germany and France joined with Russia in bringing pressure upon Japan under which she relinquished

a large part of the fruits of her victory, retaining, however, Formosa and the Pescadores Islands. The Kaiser was not only very willing to make a fresh bid, in this manner, for Russian good-will, but he objected on his own account to Japan obtaining a foothold on the Asiatic continent. By that time German statesmen had unlearned the doctrine of abstention from colonial enterprises which had been taught by Bismarck and which he himself had recanted in some degree before his death, and they and their master already had jealous eyes on what the French colonial policy had accomplished since 1879. They coveted Asiatic and African territory themselves; and the Kaiser, soon after the Japanese War, seized upon the pretext of wrongs done to German merchants and missionaries in China to take summary possession of Kiaochao, a port of the Yellow Sea, compelling the Peking Government to lease it to him for the term of ninety-nine years, and then immediately, in violation of stipulations, fortifying it in the strongest manner. The British and French also had previously obtained concessions and cessions from China, as recompenses for their intervention as against Japan.

**Ferment of audacious schemes.** That at this stage of his imperial career audacious schemes to extend his rule were fermenting in the Kaiser's brain seems to have been proven by various symptoms. Enormous masses of Germans were al-

ready settled in South America,<sup>1</sup> and they would undoubtedly have welcomed an opportunity to aid the Fatherland in asserting the Emperor's sovereignty over them. The traditional policy of the United States of America, however, stood in the way.<sup>2</sup> Therefore at the commencement of the Spanish War in 1898, Wilhelm II. tried to create a misunderstanding between Britain and America, hoping thus to obtain an opening for his enterprise in the southern hemisphere. The truculent attitude of his naval force in Manila Bay when Admiral Dewey was about to begin his attack on the port defences, revealed sufficiently the motives and expectations of the Berlin Government. But the commander of the British fleet in the harbour had also received his orders; and his declaration that "blood is thicker than water"<sup>3</sup> was followed by fitting action. Disconcerted, the Kaiser again turned his attention to Africa. A German publicist of great authority<sup>4</sup> wrote about this time: "We must wish that at any price a German country, peopled by twenty to thirty

<sup>1</sup> German emigration to the southern provinces of Brazil began in 1849.

<sup>2</sup> Brazil, the Argentine, and Chili had given tacit support to the "Monroe Doctrine," as directed against Germany.

<sup>3</sup> The German Admiral asked the British Admiral: "What will the British fleet do if we attack the American fleet?" The British Admiral answered: "I am not instructed to reply to hypothetical questions; but the American Admiral knows."—*The Origin of the War*, by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick (1914).

<sup>4</sup> Professor Schmoller.

million Germans, may grow up in Southern Brazil." But another German publicist took a different view.<sup>1</sup> "The possession of South Africa," he declared, "offers greater advantages in every respect than the possession of Southern Brazil." As elsewhere, however, the Kaiser was too late for the real banquet; he got only a few fragments from the board. Yet he hoped to make some net gain out of the ill-fortune which might befall the British. His clumsy display, prompted by von Bieberstein, of a hesitant purpose to interfere in the Boer War covered him with world-wide derision.<sup>2</sup> He had vainly thought to corrupt France and Russia with promises, just as later (1914) he tried to bribe the British Government with the prospect of feasting upon the spoils of colonial France. The former incident may be regarded as the commencement of the serious awakening of the leaders of British public opinion to the nature of the proffered amity of the German nation. It was coincident too, with the opening of the new era of German naval construction.

**A test of British tolerance.** After the greater German navy had been building for several years, it was the expressed belief of von Buelow, Chancellor of the Empire, that already it would "impose respect everywhere." That, however, was not the

<sup>1</sup> Article in *Die Grenzboten*, April 15, 1897.

<sup>2</sup> "This prince, athirst for glory, is at the same time hesitant."

—PAUL BOURGET.



furthest bourne of the Kaiser's dream. He intended his sea-power to be ultimately the equal, at least, if not the superior, of that of Great Britain. "The trident must be ours to wield," he declared. ". . . The sea is our empire." Thus, while he was fond of likening himself by implication to the great Odin, the god of war, he had also by anticipation begun to identify himself with Neptune. It was well known in Germany at an early stage of this exaggerated policy that Britain could not tolerate it for an indefinite period, and that she already regarded it as a menace to her peculiar position as a World Power. The more alert minds, indeed, in England cherished no illusions as to Germany's real object, and France and Russia held approximately the same views that they did as to the danger which it portended. Germany's purpose was first to reduce Russia and France to practical subordination to herself, and then to strike the death-blow to Britain's supremacy at sea.

**Efforts to neutralize the British power.** If Germany's fleet had already attained to its relative strength of sixteen years later, it is not difficult to determine what she would probably have attempted in aid of the Boers. Germany had tried to force England to emerge from her "splendid isolation," to use the term applied to her policy by one of her statesmen, and to lend her countenance to the Triple Alliance. And the

Kaiser endeavoured personally to obliterate the hostile impression produced in the British Isles by his telegram to Krüger, the president of the Boer republic, applauding its defiant attitude towards the English. On his uninvited visit to London in November, 1899, Wilhelm won Joseph Chamberlain over to his desire. Otherwise, however, it awakened no practical response. The project of an Anglo-German *entente* was abandoned about the time of Edward VII.'s accession to the throne. The Kaiser's motive indeed was simply to neutralize the British power, in prudent prevision of the certain rupture of Germany with France and Russia. The whole German nation sympathized candidly with the Boers, and after the failure of the Kaiser's personal mission to England, the situation was most strenuously utilized to excite in it a violent and profound detestation of the British. From that time, even while the Berlin government has still sought to draw Britain into an understanding which would keep her aloof from continental conflicts, this popular detestation has been sedulously cultivated and enhanced by all the craft of demagogy and of servile journalism.

**Germany's navy.** Britain might have crushed Germany's inferior fleet as soon as her movement to dominate the sea was thoroughly recognized; but British statesmen preferred to temporize and to try the effects of a pacific rivalry, in which it

was thought that the final success would assuredly be on the side of the elder naval power. The British resolve, however, was of other quality than those statesmen had supposed. From 1899 to 1907, Germany increased her naval expenditures by 73 per cent. while Britain increased hers by only 23. But from that point on the latter did not permit her superiority in ships of war to be further lessened. It was the beginning of the era of so-called Dreadnoughts and super-Dreadnoughts, and Germany vainly strove to launch a greater number of them in a given time than her formidable neighbour. Admiral von Tirpitz, naval secretary since 1898, was the director of this mighty effort. His most effective lieutenant in bringing public enthusiasm to its support and in keeping that enthusiasm at a high pitch during a long series of years was Admiral von Koester, to whom his countrymen gave the popular title of the "Grand Old Man of the Navy." To him was due the organization of the "Navy League" and its remarkable growth, attaining a membership of 1,250,000, under the patronage of the Kaiser's sailor-brother, Prince Heinrich of Prussia; and also the admirable training and discipline of the new navy. The rivalry in naval construction continued down to the outbreak of the Great War. In 1914 the German annual estimate for naval expenditures was more than four times as much as that of 1898. In the mean-

time Germany had refused<sup>1</sup> several amicable, though informal overtures from the British Government for what was conveniently called a "naval holiday"; that is to say to enter into an agreement for the common limitation of naval construction and expenditures for a certain number of years. The economic and moral relief in both countries and even in the world at large from such a measure would have been very great and it would have been felt at once. No further argument was needed after these refusals to prove that the most vital interests of the British Empire were at stake.

**Evolution of Britain's foreign policy.** This cause put the climax to the many influences which, since the accession of Wilhelm II., had tended to convert the British Government from its traditional attitude towards the special interests of the Continental Powers of Europe. But meanwhile several extremely important events had taken place, which also changed in a great degree the relative positions of Russia, France, Great Britain, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and the Balkan states. One was the accession of Edward VII. to the British throne. His sympathies for France and his antipathy to Wilhelm II. were well known. Hitherto the English had believed that their most

<sup>1</sup> Lord Haldane was instrumental in producing a friendlier feeling between the two governments. With this apparent object he made several visits to the German capital. But this sentiment was of short duration.

dangerous political rivals were Russia and France. Now it was obvious that Germany's growing power was the greatest and most direct menace to her commerce, her prestige on the high seas, and even her security at home. The latest manifestation of British antagonism to the French had been the series of diplomatic incidents in connection with the extension of the French authority on the borders of Siam and Tunis, Madagascar and the Congo, and on the Upper Nile. Only the pacific temper of the French Government prevented the Fashoda affair<sup>1</sup> from ending in a war-like rupture. So great was the force of tradition in the British deliberations over foreign relations that when the question of Morocco arose there was for a time at Whitehall a disposition to allow Germany complete liberty in dealing with that country, by way of offsetting the dreaded French influence.

**The Kaiser's blandishments in 1900.** As late as 1900, the Kaiser, in spite of all that he and his ministers had done to destroy it, still counted, or affected to count, upon the friendship of Britain, and he talked in what he evidently regarded as most flattering terms of "the common efforts of the two greatest Germanic states in the markets of the world." Instead of this language having a

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Marchand, with a party of French troops, took possession in the name of the Republic of a position in the Egyptian Soudan; but was obliged to yield it to the British (1898).

conciliatory tendency, it served as a fresh warning to the nation to which it was addressed of one of the dangers to which it is most sensitive—the prospective sharing of the trade which had long been its own with another and, in a sense, upstart commercial power. In fact, Germany, since 1890, had already made very grave inroads upon the commerce of the British Empire, as well as that of many other countries, and certain of the methods and devices of her merchants and manufacturers who sold goods abroad had excited the severest criticism, both in Europe and America.

**Strategic value of the Kiel Canal.** There was one feature of Germany's bellicose preparations to the significance of which the British nation was even more obtuse than it had been in the earlier stages to her exaggerated naval programme. This was the famous Kaiser Wilhelm Canal between the River Elbe, at its mouth, and Kiel Bay, in the Baltic. It was the darling project of Wilhelm II.; and one of his few important triumphs in diplomacy had been the acquisition of Heligoland from a British ministry which seems suddenly to have become purblind. The Kiel Canal was an almost essential part of the German scheme to overmaster the British navy. Formerly, in order to "bottle up" the German fleet, it would have sufficed to blockade the entrance to the Baltic, since it could never have wisely ventured, in the face of a superior force, to use any of the North Sea

ports as a base. The construction of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal compelled the British Admiralty, in the event of war with Germany, to divide its North Sea force, one part cruising off the Skagerrack, to the north of Denmark, and the other between the Dogger Bank and Heligoland. Thus the entire battle fleet of Germany, lying securely behind the land defences of the canal, could choose its time and fall in overwhelming strength upon either of the English divisions. That this was the strategic purpose of the Kiel Canal was declared again and again in German publications. Another fact of peculiar significance was the planning of certain of the great ships of the new German navy with a fuel capacity insufficient for long voyages, although ample to enable them to operate in the waters around Great Britain and Ireland or in the Mediterranean. The Kiel Canal was nearing completion as originally designed, at a cost of some \$50,000,000, when the British Admiralty began to build its Dreadnought and super-Dreadnought ships. At first this radical departure was greatly criticized, the real reason of it being unknown to the general public. But this became obvious when Germany speedily followed, as was expected, the British example, and almost simultaneously also entered upon the enlargement of the great canal. Another \$50,000,000 was spent upon it, making it broad enough and deep enough for two super-Dreadnoughts to pass

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through it abreast, and thus fully adapting it to the changed constitution of the navy. Its final inauguration was in June, 1914, scarcely six weeks before the beginning of the Great War.

**Political sagacity of Edward VII.** Edward VII. must be definitively credited with profound political insight. There had been centuries of misunderstanding between the French and the English, and yet every student of history and of humanity must know that in each country are strong traces of former reciprocal influences, not alone political, artistic, and intellectual, but ethnological and sentimental. Neither superficial traits nor manners and customs reveal the real extent to which their blood has been intermingled, from the time when more than half of France was English, when Norman or Plantagenet kings ruled in the islands, and when the court language of both North Britain and South Britain was that of Paris and Tours. The idea that two such peoples could not, in spite of their different views of life, become warm and intimate friends was absurd. It needed but the occasion and a certain coincidence of interests to bring that to pass. Within a century the British had been several times the allies of the French, but always for limited and very specific objects. The Triple Entente was of a broader and much more cordial character.

**Anglo-Japanese Alliance.** The English distrust of the Russians died harder. Russia's ponderous



but sure advance towards the northern border of India had been a perennial nightmare to several generations of British public men. The Tsar, still abetted by the Kaiser, continued to push his Siberian boundary towards the Pacific ports of China which are open to winter navigation. Russia established herself in Manchuria and Korea, the suzerainty of which was claimed by Japan, and at Port Arthur, in the Gulf of Pechili. After the diplomatic check which had been put upon Japan at the close of her war with China, the former Power and Britain, both actuated by anti-Russian and anti-German sentiments, found themselves leaning frankly towards each other because of common objects in the Far-East. The alliance which became effective in 1905 was planned. The high contracting parties were bound together for mutual defence in Eastern Asia and India and to maintain the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire, menaced by the greed of Germany and Russia.

**The Russo-Japanese War.** Japan felt herself morally strengthened by Britain's avowed friendship for her long-purposed war with Russia. Her martial energy and strategical and tactical skill in this contest, notwithstanding her brilliant mastery of China in the previous decade, were a surprise to the world. Russia was at a great disadvantage because of the corruption of her military administration and the lack of preparation

of her army and the difficulty of supplying it by a single railway line thousands of miles in length across the inhospitable plains of Siberia and Manchuria, and further, of the internal dangers, partly fermented from without, which threatened to overthrow the imperial régime. The progressive movement in Russia which effected certain reforms of wide-reaching significance was followed by a mild reaction. It did much, however, to reaffirm the unity and passionate patriotism of the people, and in this sense to prepare them for the great struggle with pan-Germanism which seemed already in sight. Russia's defeat in the Far-East was doubtless, also, a salutary discipline. The military efficiency of Japan was proved to be in every respect of the very first order. She gave an object-lesson in scientific and humane warfare far more striking than any that mankind had yet received. Peace was signed under the auspices of the United States of America as mediator, Japan retaining Korea, which she had conquered, the Kwang-tu Province of China, and the southern half of the island of Saghalien in the Sea of Okhotsk, which had been used by Russia for penal purposes.

**Formation of the Triple Entente.** Britain was relieved of pressing apprehensions as to Russia's activities in Asia and gave her attention more fully to the problem of providing against the execution of Germany's standing menace. Dif-

ferences between Britain and France in colonial matters had been arranged and there had been a special exchange of amenities, marked in 1902 by a visit by King Edward to the President of the French Republic. An arbitration treaty, made in 1903, was followed, in the next year, by that in which the French rights in Morocco and the rights of the British in Egypt, which she had occupied since 1880, were reciprocally recognized. The accord thus begun ripened into what was soon known as the Entente Cordiale, the final sanction to which was given in 1912, when the military and naval authorities of the two countries began to consult about co-operative measures which possibly would be taken in the event of either of them being at war with a third. In view of the altered diplomatic conditions in both Europe and Asia and the hard-and-fast alliance of France and Russia, it was natural that Britain should be more than ever inclined to sink her latent animosity towards the latter. The Anglo-Russian questions<sup>1</sup> were duly settled also, as the Anglo-French questions

<sup>1</sup> One of the most important of these questions was that of the relative liberty of action of Russia and Britain in Persia. They had already put a check upon German schemes in that quarter; and Britain by protecting the Sheik Mobarek of Koweit against both the Turks and the Germans had retarded for some years at least the pushing through of the Bagdad railway to the Persian Gulf. It is still doubtful whether a suitable eastern terminus for it will be found, unless, indeed, the British shall first have taken over the concession.

had been, upon a basis of mutual conciliation, and in 1907, the Anglo-Russian understanding became likewise a fact. Thus the Triple Entente was established, much to the chagrin of the German Kaiser and his ministers.

**The Moroccan difficulty.** Already, in 1905, the value of the Anglo-French friendship as a factor for the world's peace had been proven. Again it had been Britain, as in 1876, although with motives not wholly identical, who prevented war. Germany had been ignored in the agreement which insured to France the privilege of dealing with Morocco as her own interests might dictate, and to Britain a similar freedom in Egypt. In March, the German Emperor, apparently acting upon a sudden impulse, but really deliberately in pursuit of a long-considered policy and with the concurrence of one of his most trusted secret advisers, Baron von Holstein, "that long-time, sinister, and all-powerful figure in German politics,"<sup>1</sup> went in his yacht to Tangier, and landed there in order to manifest openly his "sympathy" for the Moorish Sultan in his demand for an international conference to pass upon the claims of the French. Delcassé, Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared energetically that such a conference was unnecessary. The German Chancellor, von Buelow, by the implied threat of war, caused the instant retirement of Delcassé

<sup>1</sup> *Men around the Kaiser*, by Frederic William Wile (1914).

from the French Cabinet.<sup>1</sup> It was a measure of prudent abasement on the part of France, since she knew only too well that she was not yet sufficiently prepared to cope with her inveterate enemy. It has been truly said that this was "the deepest humiliation which had been put upon her since Sedan." The grateful Kaiser raised von Buelow on the same day to the rank of a Prussian prince. But France had felt the strong presence of the Anglo-Saxon Power behind her, even while Germany was gaining a temporary victory in that brutal species of diplomacy at which she alone excelled. In the end it was indeed a hollow victory. The terms of accommodation between Germany and France were arranged at a conference of representatives of the Powers directly or indirectly represented (of which the United States of America was one), in the following year at Algeciras in Spain. Austria-Hungary seconded the German claims and Britain those of France. The outcome was an agreement whereby France, while conceding to Germany certain privileges of trade and traffic in Morocco, received the sanction of Europe in her purpose of dominating the country, by peaceful means, if possible; by force, if necessary.

<sup>1</sup> Delcassé believed that France should accept the German challenge. Reports on the condition of the army and navy, however, showed that there was a great unreadiness for war. Delcassé having committed himself in opposition to the conference, his resignation of the foreign ministry became inevitable.

**Austria-Hungary annexes Bosnia and Herzegovina.** The Kaiser had hoped that this would be an opportunity for weakening the Anglo-French accord. It was strengthened, however, instead. Disappointment rankled at Berlin, aggravating the Kaiser's itching need of signalizing the military pre-eminence of his empire. This was further intensified by the Anglo-Russian understanding. The military party emitted more and more boldly the idea that France must be attacked at the first favourable moment and so far destroyed that for many years to come she would be incapable of making war. Then would be the turn of England to crouch under the German scourge. Or it might be that Russia would be the first to feel the full weight of the "mailed fist." When, therefore, in 1908, Austria-Hungary intimated to the Berlin Foreign Office her intention of consummating the undue advantage given her by the Berlin Congress by definitively annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina, in direct violation of its mandate and of her own solemn engagement, Germany approved. This was a cruel blow to the dearest aspirations of the Serbs. There were earnest protests from Russia and the other Powers. But Russia was unready and had to hold off her hands.

**The Kaiser's insolent challenge to the world.** This was the most brilliant chance which had yet been presented by the course of events for the

Kaiser to illustrate in his most theatrical manner the magnificence of his rôle as the "All-Highest-War-Lord" of the German nation, whose special ally, proclaimed by him in many public utterances, was the Lord of Hosts, the dread God of Battles. His phrase of the "mailed fist" had already been implanted in history. The ugly sound of it had reverberated in all the chancelleries of Europe and wherever world-politics and the characters of hereditary rulers were discussed. Now he gave universal notice that the cause of Franz Josef in his aggression upon the Balkan Slavs was his own, and that if need be Germany would stand beside her ally "in shining armour" bedight, like a feal knight of old.

The moment was well chosen for this move. Britain was struggling with embarrassing domestic problems. Russia was still immersed in the reorganization and upbuilding of her military and economic forces, shaken not only by the defeat which Japan had inflicted upon her, but by the internal ebullition of the Empire, which had preceded certain fundamental changes, hardly tested as yet, in its political structure. Since, of the six Great Powers, she is the one the mass of whose subjects have the closest affinity to the Balkan peoples, and the one, therefore, most profoundly concerned in their future, her inability to intervene at this crisis prevented the objections and reclamations addressed to the Vienna Government

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from having the least practical force.<sup>1</sup> Russia, indeed, demanded a territorial indemnity for Serbia. The district or *sandjak* of Novi-Bazar would have been most available for this purpose. But unquestionably Austria-Hungary intended to appropriate that, also, at her earliest convenience. Russia perforce relapsed into silence; but her national and racial pride had been deeply wounded. The sting was not yet cured when, six years later, Austria-Hungary and Germany, acting together upon a pretext that was even less honourable, again defied her.

**The Kaiser's second provocation.** Germany exulted over Austria's success in 1908 more than Austria did herself, although it was a long step towards what she believed to be her manifest destiny. German diplomatic arrogance had received another dangerous stimulus.

France in the meantime had occupied Fez and nominally was in military possession of Morocco. She was taking full measure of the latitude accorded her by what is known as the Act of Algeciras, and was about to establish a protectorate over the Moorish Empire. But Germany professed that she herself had not thus understood the act. She declared that the military occupation by France secured to the latter something to

<sup>1</sup> Austria-Hungary threatened to convoke a congress of the Powers to revise the Treaty of Berlin; but none wished for such a congress less than she did herself, unless it were Turkey.



which she was not exclusively entitled. If this policy was to continue, Germany must take "compensation." She startled the world in July, 1911, by sending the gunboat *Panther* to Agadir on the western coast, the southernmost port of Morocco, and as yet unopened to commerce. It seemed Germany's purpose to undo, if possible, the work of the Algeciras conference, and to obtain for herself a large section of the Sultan's dominions.

**Europe on the edge of war in 1911.** It was then considered by many of the statesmen of Europe that war between France and Germany, leading probably to a general conflict, was more imminent than it had been since the threat of Bismarck, in 1876. The danger was all the greater because the Kaiser had under-calculated British public opinion as to his naval ambition, which was now disclosing itself in all its pretentious extravagance, just as he was destined to under-calculate it in 1914 in regard to the proposed crushing of Serbia and the trampling under foot, with accompaniment of every atrocity of barbarous warfare, of the neutral rights of Belgium, guaranteed by his predecessors on the Prussian throne. Neither France nor Britain was so patiently disposed as they had been in 1905. Many Britons were of the belief that their country ought before that to have taken the initiative in a naval war to put an end to the inordinate increase of the

German navy; and in France there were already multiple signs of the great patriotic awakening which was to be so impressive a feature of the next few years. Wiser thoughts must have come to Germany, for while the negotiations over the Moroccan question dragged almost insufferably, the tone of them became less and less acrid.<sup>1</sup>

**Diplomatic victory for France.** Finally, the solution was found in two treaties, by which the French protectorate over Morocco was ratified and Germany acquired a considerable area in the Congo basin, adjacent to her colony of Cameroon. The sacrifice on the part of France was relatively slight. She had gained not only the formal sanction of her control of Morocco, but the exclusion of Germany from any meddling in the political and economical affairs of that rich and hitherto unexploited land.

**More heat added to the German ferment.** The German press and the German public, aside from some early and perfunctory pretences of triumph over French diplomacy, finally recognized the fact that it was German diplomacy that had been beaten in effect, just as it had been at Algiers in 1906. Furthermore the Triple Entente had again been strengthened, instead of weakened,

<sup>1</sup> Germany substituted a claim to "compensation" in the Congo basin for that to a portion of Southern Morocco. "Black-mail" is the word which has been applied, and perhaps fittingly, to her conduct in this whole matter.

by the Kaiser's interference. Thus more heat was added to the feverish and envious desire to prove by armed force the superiority of the German nation. From 1911 onward the best observers in Europe were ever anxiously watchful for the incident or episode which must unloose the tempest of war. Germany for more than forty years had diligently sown the wind. The political conditions which she had helped to create in the Balkan Peninsula made it probable that the whirlwind would strike first in that quarter, but that it would speedily involve almost, if not quite, the whole of Europe, and perhaps other nations in remote latitudes.

**Development of the Balkan situation.** Austria-Hungary's seizure of Bosnia and Herzegovina prompted in some measure the formation of the Balkan League, of which, however, the immediate and chief object was the release of the racial kinsmen of the constituent nations, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro, from atrocious Turkish oppression. The Turkish outrages upon Christians, in all the regions remaining under Ottoman rule, had been merely interrupted by the treaty which followed the Russian War, and they were ever being renewed. In the conference succeeding the Berlin Congress, Thessaly and a part of Epirus had been accorded to Greece, because of the racial affinity of the inhabitants. But Greece demanded the annexation of Mace-

donia and the island of Crete as well. The Cretans revolted in 1897, and Greece made war upon Turkey. Beaten at every point, she was only saved from reconquest by the intervention of the Great Powers. To the Cretans, the Sultan, under moral compulsion, granted complete autonomy. This compact, however, was never carried out in absolute good faith. For Greece and the Grecian populations of Crete and Macedonia the burning question continued to be that of annexation.

**The Near-East question approaches its great crisis.** After the commencement of the twentieth century the problem of the Near-East demanded a final solution even more insistently than before. It was inconclusively argued in some quarters that the peace of Europe was now assured, since the balance of the two great associations, the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente, had been established, and since a meeting of the German and Russian emperors was soon to be arranged. But the Triple Alliance had within itself the germ of its dissolution. Italy had viewed with cold displeasure the incorporation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Austrian Empire. It was in no wise to her interest that Austria-Hungary, who still held provinces in which there were millions of Italians, should widen her boundaries to the southward, in a region as to which Italy herself might have ulterior ambitions. The revolution at Constantinople, which overthrew Abdul-Hamid,

the "Red Sultan," so called because of his ferocious butcheries, and placed his successor and the country under the no less tyrannic control of the party of the Young Turks, did not bring such relief to the oppressed populations as many had hoped for, and it added nothing for the time to the defensive strength of the Ottoman Government. Germany, in 1902, had already obtained from the latter, besides a great number of other valuable concessions, that of the Bagdad railway, most important of all from the economic point of view. She was suspected by Britain, France, and Italy of a purpose to occupy the Turkish provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica in North Africa, under some plausible pretext of amity to the Ottoman Government. This, of course, would have led ultimately to complete appropriation, and would have introduced the German power as a dangerous wedge between Tunis and Egypt.

**Italy forestalls Germany in North Africa.** Italy resolved to seize Tripoli and Cyrenaica as in some sense a compensation for the settlement of the Moroccan question, out of which she had gotten no profit.<sup>1</sup> Her war with Turkey, begun in November, 1911, ended in absolute victory. It added to the German ill-humour. The Kaiser had for years made cajoling efforts to capture the favour and the perfect confidence of the

<sup>1</sup> France and Britain tacitly approved of Italy's action, although in both countries the press violently condemned it.

Turkish people, and the sudden attack upon them by a member of the Triple Alliance could not but injure him, at least temporarily, in their eyes. It betrayed also a disposition on the part of Italy to lift herself out of the position of mere hand-maiden to her stronger associates, to which portion from the beginning they had obviously assigned her.

**The Balkan war of liberation.** After this war, however, came another, which was a far worse blow to the Kaiser's carefully contrived programme in the Near-East. The preparations for this war had been most secret. The Balkan League suddenly invaded Turkey-in-Europe. The rapid triumphs of Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro astounded the world and emphasized more than had yet been done the startling evolution of modern warfare. German plans for dominating Turkey and for gaining control of the overland commerce between the Persian Gulf on the one side and the Ægean Sea and the Mediterranean on the other were thrown into confusion. The Powers stood aghast and irresolute in face of an event which had burst upon them almost unawares, although they ought long ago to have expected it. Austria saw erected in the sudden aggrandizement of the Balkan states a formidable barrier to her further absorption of the Slav nationalities. Both Germany and Austria had a powerful motive for prescribing a limit to the Slavo-Greek conquests;

but they were reluctant at that particular conjuncture to resort to force, lest they provoke a general conflict under conditions which would be unfavourable to themselves. All the rest of Europe would have opposed their taking of the lion's share in the dismemberment of Turkey, and France and Russia, and perhaps Italy, too, in that case, would have been only too glad to attack them, to avenge old wrongs, with full assurance of the united aid of the Balkan states. Austria-Hungary was now more vulnerable than ever in her Slavic provinces, where immense populations sympathized with the aspirations and the self-liberating efforts of their southern kinsmen. Turkey, upon whom Germany had greatly counted, was quite as near again to the loss of Constantinople and the last remnant of her European domain as she had been in 1878. Germany did not dare to turn her back upon Britain, France, and Russia, and these Powers were equally desirous of adjourning the great conflict. Every diplomatic lever was brought to bear to induce the Balkan League and the Turks at this point to cease fighting and to open negotiations. Under pressure of the Powers, peace was concluded, leaving Adrianople and the greater part of Thrace and all of Macedonia in the hands of the allies. The division of the conquered territory was to give rise immediately to discord and enmity. Austria and Germany did their utmost to produce this

effect. The precise manner in which the partitioning of Turkey-in-Europe was to be carried out was one of the essential conditions of the united action of the Balkan states. But Austria now forbade the annexing of Northern Albania,<sup>1</sup> whereby Serbia, hitherto without a seaport, would have gained a position in the Adriatic and would have opened to herself a possible future of commercial and naval greatness. Italy had viewed this prospect with concern, for she had purposed, since the era of her unification, to share with Austria alone the reversion of the Albanian sovereignty and the control of the Adriatic.

**Austria and Germany profit by the second Balkan war.** The Powers, in dread of wider complications, were the facile accomplices of Austrian diplomacy. The terms of peace reduced Serbia to dependence upon the good-will of a neighbour for a commercial outlet by Salonika, in the territory allotted to Greece. The Serbs were intensely indignant and looked to Bulgaria for compensation. No opportunity was lost by Germany and Austria to fan this incipient flame into a new conflagration within the League itself. Bulgaria refused to yield to Serbia any part of the land which she had acquired. Serbia and Greece turned their arms against her, while Rumania,

<sup>1</sup> Austria had several army corps ready on the Bosnian frontier to invade Albania, if the Serbs and Montenegrins refused to evacuate it.



jealous of her large pretensions and desirous of forcing from her the cession of a small piece of territory on the Black Sea, threatened her with a fresh and finely trained army in the rear, and actually advanced unresisted to the Bulgarian capital. Turkey grasped this fortuitous occasion to regain possession of Adrianople, which had been her strongest northern bulwark. Bulgaria was stripped of a great part of the excessive share of territorial spoil which she had insisted upon retaining and it was annexed by Serbia. Bulgaria's dream of preponderance in the Balkans, for a time at least, was frustrated. Thus ended the second Balkan War. Unfortunately the arbitrary readjustments of boundaries among the late belligerents placed many thousand people of the Bulgarian nationality under Serbian authority, from which they had a profound aversion. Bulgaria had just cause for bitter resentment toward her former ally. But, even worse than that, the new treaty left the Serbs more than ever exasperated against their arrogant neighbour, the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

**German scheming for Turkish goodwill resumed.** Germany's optimism regarding the Turco-Persian schemes was not only revived, but was reinforced by the retaking of Adrianople and the disruption of the Balkan League, which, together with Turkey's pressing need of material succour from without, and notwithstanding Aus-

tria's general designs upon the Balkans, rendered the road of German influence in Asia Minor even easier and clearer than it was before. But, on the other hand, German political pride suffered keenly from the loss of diplomatic prestige through Italy's independent action, in 1911, and that of the Balkan League, in 1912. The Kaiser's Government had laboured hard since the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, in 1908, to prevent further mutations in the Balkan situation until such time as it might be to its own interest to upset the *statu quo* or to induce Austria-Hungary to do so. In that task it had failed. It had been unable to put anything in the way of the first Balkan War, although it had supported Austria in the post-bellum negotiations and later in the placing of a feeble and pusillanimous German prince on the newly erected throne of Albania. But henceforth there was a new problem: the maintenance of a new Balkan balance, which as a matter of fact was no balance at all. And Germany's policy was to sustain this at all costs; to prevent all political change in the Balkans which would not be to her profit or to that of her Austrian ally, or of both, and all in the Ottoman Empire that would not be to her own exclusive profit. As an Italian publicist has expressed it:

She had need that the whole question of the Near-East should stand still until the moment should arrive

for founding a Berlin-Bagdad Empire. But to say to the Turkish gangrene, "Stop, because I will it," was like commanding the sun to stand still because one lacks a little of being at the end of one's journey. To Germany it was most important that the Balkan peoples should not develop and become strong. She commanded them to remain little, growing just enough and no more, to maintain peace and the *statu quo*. She was almost like a scheming pedagogue who deludes himself with the idea that he can retard the development of a lusty youth by keeping him in the bursting garments of his infantile years. In short, the plodding German mentality came into collision with the ungovernable force of things; the strength of the Austro-Prussian-Turkish combination was shaken and overthrown by the sheer impetus of the world's life.

**Dismemberment of Turkey to wait on Germany's good pleasure.** Germany and Austria-Hungary had made unto themselves a system of politics which was to culminate in the distant future and according to which the Turkish Empire must subsist a certain number of years longer, and hence in the meantime must be victorious in the Italian and Balkan wars. But it was not victorious; and then came, not the revision and recasting of the policy in question, but amazed disappointment, recrimination, rage against the entire world. The steam had escaped from the boiler; now therefore the boiler must henceforth be kept shut. In July, 1914, this effort was made: to fasten down the escape-valve; and when there was an explosion it was debated whether this was really due to the steam or to the closed valve!

In truth it was due to the renewed attempts of the allied empires of Central Europe to repress the Slavic nationalist movement, with a view to an indefinite increase of their own wealth, their territorial possessions and their political and commercial power.

**The Bagdad Railway a German military project.** Among the larger indirect causes of the Great War it is hardly possible to attach too much importance to Germany's project, already partly executed, of creating a new trade route between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, shortening by ten days the time of transit between Europe and India, as compared with the Suez Canal. Great as would be the commercial utility of the Bagdad Railway, its immediate military value to Germany, as the intimate ally and mentor of the Turks, would be immensely greater. German domination of Asia Minor would probably mean an ultimate effort to possess the Suez Canal and to wrest Egypt from the British. If the Bagdad Railway system, extending from two ports on the Bosphorus and the Ægean Sea, on the one hand, and to the head of the Persian Gulf and to Mecca on the other, had been completed before the commencement of the Great War, Germany would probably have lost no time in sending a large force to seize the canal and to invade Egypt. The projected line to Mecca, for most of its length, parallels, at no great distance, the Syrian coast,

the Suez Canal, and the eastern shore of the Red Sea. The success of such a campaign would have relegated the Indo-British trade, which is of colossal importance, to the old route around the Cape of Good Hope; in other words, against German competition, it would be irretrievably ruined. But of yet more startling import is the fact that it would have compelled Britain to send transports and warships many thousands of miles out of the direct course to afford protection to her Asiatic possessions. Beyond Egypt, the German ambition had in view the Soudan, British East-Africa, the Belgian Congo, Portuguese East-Africa, Rhodesia, and South-Africa. Germany is believed even to have entertained the hope that victory in the Great War would enable her in a few years to possess the whole of the African continent.<sup>1</sup>

Beyond that achievement, Wilhelm dreamed also of India, as did Napoleon.

We have reviewed the chief general causes of the Great War. It remains to consider the pretexts and so-called provocations that were set forth by Germany and Austria-Hungary to justify or to excuse their action in inflicting this unexampled calamity upon a horrified world. The real provocations were given by Germany and Austria-Hungary themselves.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, historian of the South-African War. Dr. Paul Rohrbach, the German publicist, wrote in 1912: "England can be attacked and mortally wounded by land, from Europe, only in one place—Egypt."

## CHAPTER II

### PRETEXTS AND PROVOCATIONS—THE CLASHING OF SERBIAN AND AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN AMBITIONS

The Slavs as the Outer Guard of Christendom until the Turkish Conquest—The Serb Spirit Illustrated in their Patriotic Epic—Indictment of Inhuman Warfare against both Christian and Paynim—Ferment of Cruelty in the Blood—Revolution by Assassination and Government by Massacre—Russian Slowness and Caution in Dealing with the Balkan Question as Opposed to Austrian Greed and Intrigue—Serbia's Hindrance to Austro-Hungary's Designs—Political Ambition of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand—Mysterious Aspects of the Crime of Sarajevo—The Primal Responsibility Divided among Four Capitals—Franz Ferdinand Regarded as Dangerous to the Empire and the Dynasty—Hated by both Magyars and Serbs—His Quarrel with Kaiser Wilhelm—Deceptive Diplomatic Situation after the Assassination—A Greater Crime in Preparation—Germany and Austria-Hungary intent on Upsetting the European Equilibrium.

**I**N the first half of the second millennium after Christ, the Slavs in south-eastern Europe might have fulfilled the mission of outer guard for the nations of the West and have kept the Moslems from penetrating into the Balkan Peninsula and Austria and Hungary, if the great

schism of the Christian Church which followed the division of the Roman Empire could have been averted. To this schism in great part is due the deep-rooted mutual antagonisms of the Southern Slavs, the cause of their perpetual discords and their subjection for several hundred years to the "unspeakable Turk."

**Divisions among the Slavs.** Slavs who are adherents of the Roman Catholic Church and those who acknowledge only the Greek or Orthodox communion have always been at enmity one with another. This enmity differs from that which both feel towards the Moslem chiefly by reason of its peculiar intensity. It is the old story of brothers at odds. This alone made it possible for the Turks to conquer the Balkan peoples. To the oppressors of the Southern Slavs, religious prejudice, religious jealousy, and religious superstition have been ever ready weapons for the prevention of united resistance on the part of the latter, and of united efforts for national and racial advancement. But for that, Macedonia, Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina might long ago have joined themselves politically to the more fortunate Slav states with which respectively they had a particular affinity, or have formed by themselves one powerful Slav state, capable of protecting their rights against all aggressors. For example, the Romanism of the Croats and Dalmatians has kept them apart

from the Orthodox Serbs, whom, indeed, they regard as their inferiors. About one-half of the people of Bosnia are Roman Catholics and nearly a third are Orthodox Catholics. The Austro-Hungarian Government did its best to keep the Catholic, the Orthodox and the Moslem inhabitants of all the Balkan states and provinces at constant loggerheads with one another. The possible union of the Southern Slavs was for it a most serious danger.

**Significance of the Serb literature.** There are brilliant periods in the history of this race, showing to what permanent greatness it could have risen if its essential aspirations, wherever it was found, had been more nearly identical. The Turkish conquest arrested the intellectual culture of the Southern Slavs, but not until the great Serbian epic had been created. This, like the poems of Homer, had oral currency for several centuries before it was put into writing. It reflects something of the sensuous nature and the native mysticism of the Serb, his virile infatuation with danger, and the tragic quality of his patriotism. The battle of Kossovo in the fourteenth century, wherein the Serbs believed that they had lost their independence, is the climatic episode.

**Climax of the national epic.** The Tsar Lazarus Gerbliamovich proclaims that any Serb who is not in the battle shall be for ever accursed, both himself and his posterity. The Tsarina Militza,



nevertheless, lest she die of fear and loneliness, begs that one of her nine brothers may remain with her. The Tsar yields. She asks for Boschke. But when before the palace the thousands of keen lances of the departing cavalcade blaze blithely in the sun, she sees her brother Boschke at its head, bearing the standard of the Cross. She entreats him to stay. He makes no reply, nor any sign of having heard; but puts spurs to his horse. Then she tries to persuade another, and still another, and yet another of her brothers to bear her company. None either pauses or turns his head. And she falls prone on the stones of the terrace. There, as he passes, the Tsar sees her unconscious. He calls the most faithful of his servitors: "Go, carry her in, and remain with her. Thou needest not come to the battle." And he rides on. The old warrior, with tears in his eyes, obeys the first of these injunctions; but no sooner has he placed the Tsarina in safety than he rushes forth, flings himself upon a horse, and gallops madly away towards the plain of Kossovo.

On the eve of the battle, on the threshold of a cottage which overlooks the plain, a beautiful maiden is greeted by three warrior-nobles, the bravest, the most famed of all in that gallant host. The first gives her his costly mantle; the second his golden ring; the third the jewelled band which he has worn upon his arm. And each says to her in turn: "Take this, fair maiden, for

memory of one who dies tomorrow on yonder plain."

**Legend of the Tsar Lazarus.** At night, after the battle, the Tsarina, from a fleeing traitor, learns that the Tsar is dead; that all his warrior-nobles have perished; that the hero Milosch has killed the Sultan Mourad. And in the morning the beautiful maiden goes down into the plain. She brings cool water, and bread that is snow-white, and wine of the colour of gold for those who may need them. But she finds only the dead and dying. She seeks the warrior-nobles from whom she received the gifts. Between gasps, a soldier who is in his last agony, answers her: "Seest thou yonder wedded group of lances astride a bleeding heap of slain. There lie thy heroes. Go not near, lest thy white robe be stained."

A young Turk, stumbling upon the Tsar's severed head, flings it into a fountain. Forty years afterwards, travellers, crossing the plain at night, see a strangely glimmering light. They approach, and behold! beneath the crystal water the head of Lazarus! They lift it thence and lay it upon the ground. But the head takes wings and flies away; and later it is found upon the sculptured stone which covers the other remains long buried, of the royal Serb.

The national epic and the Serbian battle-songs of the first part of the fourteenth century are treasured by the Slavic peasants. By the tradi-

tions embodied in them the hatred of Christian for paynim, handed down from the Crusades, is kept alive in its full fervour. Not only by reason of their peculiar temperament, but also because of immemorial habit, the Slavs of the Balkans are among the most ferocious warriors of modern times. The indictment of inhumanity on the field of battle holds equally against them and against the Turks.

**"Reign of Terror" in Macedonia.** Throughout the lengthy propaganda of the Bulgar-Macedonian committee which prepared the way for the first Balkan War, while striving primarily to arouse Europe to the point of intervention, the revolutionary bands were guilty of many barbarous acts quite as horrible, although in the nature of things not so frequent, nor comprising so great a number of victims, as those which were perpetrated by command of the "Red Sultan." The most distressing aspect of the "reign of terror" which existed in Macedonia about the year 1903, is this cynical course of provocation pursued by Bulgarian agitators. To them it apparently mattered little how many of their racial kindred were slaughtered by the Turks or the Albanian Moslems, in consequence of this policy, provided that, for the enlightened public of Europe and America a banquet of horrors was set almost daily, wherewith to keep alive its execration of Ottoman rule. This end was fully

served. Comparatively few persons who did not make a particular study of events in Turkey-in-Europe knew of the real merits of the case. Truly the Turks were inexcusable. Towards Christian populations "government by massacre" had been their polity for ages; but the effort to aggravate the effects of such government, even in order to hasten its overthrow, by sacrifices which are too heartless and abominable to be told in detail, can find no sincere apologist, save among men who are equally devoid of the simplest humanity and the most elemental sense of justice.

**Revolution by Assassination.** This effort, however, was not surprising in the Southern Slavs. A brave, staunch, and passionate race, their history is more thickly sprinkled with blood than that of most others. The double regicide in Serbia, which preceded in 1903 the return of the Kara-georgievichian dynasty, in the person of King Peter, produced a sentiment of repulsion throughout the world equal almost to that which in 1914 was to be awakened by the senseless massacres by drunken German armies in Belgium and the north and north-east of France. The moral effect of either will hardly be obliterated by many years of peace and civilizing tendencies. True it is that revolution by assassination was sufficiently common in the Near-East, and that the dynasty which was dethroned by the political butchers of Belgrade had proved a grievous in-

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cubus to the nation; that its influence was debasing and demoralizing and that its removal cleared the way for a more rapid political and economic advance. But it convinced mankind that there is a ferment of cruelty in the Serbian blood. And unfortunately this same reproach (though its application was inept) fell eleven years later from the pen of that exemplar of calculating cruelty, Wilhelm II., when in July he wrote<sup>\*</sup> to his august cousin the Tsar Nicolas, to justify the criminal purpose of Austria-Hungary, in regard to Serbia, for which he himself was largely responsible.

**Counter-cruelty born of oppression.** The two Balkan conflicts furnished many further proofs of this ferment of cruelty. Nevertheless, in judging the Southern Slavs, it must be remembered that for more than five hundred years they had undergone every kind of foul and cowardly exasperation at the hands of their exotic masters. Their character as known in the twentieth century is undoubtedly in large measure the outgrowth of those ordeals. Its contrast to that of their kinsmen the Russians is very marked. For centuries the Russians of pure blood were treated as children by their "Great Father," the White Tsar. The typical Russian peasant is mild, trusting, dutiful, and kind. For few offences except heresy and

<sup>\*</sup> Despatch from Wilhelm II. to Nicolas II., July 28th: "The Serbs are still dominated by the same spirit which prompted them to the assassination of their King and Queen."

treason has he suffered punishment that was wantonly cruel. In the dominant traits of his character he remains as the great Russian writers of the past depicted him: an overgrown boy. The Slav of the Balkans is a man hardened and sharpened into an instrument of rapacious cunning and cruelty by the centuries-long contact of himself and his forebears with the grindstone of implacable oppression.

**Russian jealousy of the Southern Slavs.** To the Southern Slavs, Russia's course as to their nationalistic tendencies appeared slow, indolent, and unduly cautious. It was so perhaps because she understood only too well those ebullient qualities which had so long conduced to discords and indiscretions, rather than to unity and efficient resolve. Russia at various conjunctures showed jealousy of the independent impulses of her Balkan kin. In the treaty of San Stefano she favoured Serbia at the expense of Bulgaria, only to find a few years later that the former was maintaining more confidential relations with Austria-Hungary than with herself. Russia desired the growth of national sentiment among the Balkan Slavs; yet she was constantly fearful that it might outdistance her own special schemes of aggrandizement. Bulgaria rejected the political tutelage of Russia and divorced her ecclesiastical administration from the Greek patriarchate at Constantinople. The Greeks, as well as the Turks, were

disquieted by the Bulgarian activity in Macedonia. This question became more and more complicated. Encouraged by Russia, Serbia and Greece and Rumania all took a hand in it. It was Austria-Hungary who, in the short war of 1885, saved Bulgaria from excessive punishment by the Serbs. Her policy in the Balkans was more wily, and always more alert and active than that of Russia. Austria and Britain both lent their good offices to Bulgaria in the settlement of her ecclesiastical controversy with Constantinople. Bulgaria had leanings towards a union with the Roman Catholic Church. Austria-Hungary and Britain would both have been glad to see this union effected, the former for two reasons: because her own population was overwhelmingly Catholic and because the separation from the Greek Church would have been a distinct blow to Russia; and the latter for the second of these reasons more than for any other. It was only after Boris, the Crown Prince of Bulgaria, had been converted to Orthodoxy, a few years later, that Russia assumed once more a cordial attitude towards this country.

**Checks to Russia in the Balkans.** When the inevitable trend of events had brought about the formation of the Balkan League, it had already been long evident that the time for illusions, whether sentimental or political, as to the future of the Southern Slavs was fully past. Russia's policy of peacefully influencing their progress

and of barring Austria-Hungary's southward advance by mere diplomacy had met with many checks and mishaps. Both Serbia and Bulgaria had grown weary of her counsels. The selfishness of her aims was too obvious. The Balkan states resolved that their future must belong to themselves alone. Austria's methods were less subtle, if shrewder, than the pretended benevolence of the great northern Power, which had never defined its purposes and hopes as to the Balkans except in the vaguest and most elusive terms. Austria, since the Napoleonic period, had steadily gained ground in that region and seemed consistently bent upon compensating herself there for her losses in Italy. Not even a partial footing could Russia obtain in the Balkans. Why Austria looked calmly on while Turkey continued, in her European provinces, to slaughter and abuse her Slavic subjects, may be easily understood. She was nearest at hand and she had the best chance of profit from the ever-increasing jumble and tumult of jarring interests. But it is far less comprehensible that Russia should have coquetted indefinitely with a similar hope. A frank course on her part of direct help to her fellow-Slavs of the South would at least have unmasked the other Great Powers, which were playing a waiting game of hypocrisy to the whole question of the breaking up of the Ottoman Empire and the prevention of barbarities both in the Balkans and in Armenia; and it would have



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shortened by many years the solving the Near-East puzzle. The War of 1877-8 accomplished much for Russia as well as for the Southern Slavs. The result was not of a nature to deter, but rather to encourage a firm and open course in that field of action. But Russia could not again be induced to budge until confronted with the certain alternative of shameful quiescence, involving an irretrievable loss of relative power, or a tardy intervention which placed in the scale of battle all the tremendous resources of her empire and those of five other important nations. The Russian masses listened with deep emotion to the call of racial kinship from the South. But the ambitious classes of Russia did not find in that summons a sufficient reason for taking arms. Constantinople, or a footing, at least, on the *Ægean* Sea, was the only lure which could move them. Russia, it was true, must gain her outlet to the southward, but this consummation might wait, and meanwhile she must at all hazards prevent any Great Power from forestalling her. Constantinople stood in the imaginations of Russian orators and poets as a symbol of the future apogee of their country's grandeur. Russian culture reflected very strongly that of the Byzantine Empire, and even the common people shared in the tradition of the intellectual classes that the city of the Eastern Cæsars should one day be the capital of the Northern Tsars, the true successors of Constantine the Great

in the guardianship of the Orthodox Church. But there was also a variation to this theoretical scheme, and this was that Russia might forego the actual possession of Constantinople, and might arrive at the Sea of Marmora and the Ægean by way of the Trans-Caucasus; in other words, through the conquest of Anatolia. This would have been less offensive to France and Britain, and might have harmonized perfectly with a policy tending to consolidate the Balkan states in a permanent union or federation, to which Constantinople might then have fallen by natural and legitimate inheritance. It is true that the rest of Europe would have had something to say upon this subject; but after the Triple Entente had been well established, it can scarcely be doubted that France and Britain would have listened favourably to any sane proposal which promised the clearing up of the Near-East muddle. They would probably have contented themselves with sharing between them the remainder of Asia Minor, while sanctioning the complete possession by Italy and Greece of the Ægean archipelagoes. The Triple Entente, with the Balkan states closely bound to it, need not have feared, as events have since shown, the strength which Germany and Austria-Hungary could have brought against them. Perhaps this situation might even have overawed those countries and have prevented the very aggression for which they had prepared.

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**If the Great War had been hastened . . . ?**

On the other hand, if the Great War had thus been hastened, it would certainly have been under conditions considerably more favourable to the anti-German Powers, since of their own choosing, than those which actually existed in August, 1914. Britain and France might have given Germany and Austria colonial compensations, most likely in Western Africa, for the annihilation of their projects in Asia Minor and the Balkans. The ease with which the Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian differences were composed, making possible the Triple Entente, pointed to the possible laying of a foundation by the same conciliatory process for the satisfactory settlement of the Near-East question. That no such great effort was made, prior to the Austro-Serbian crisis, is only another proof of the very limited scope of the ordinary statesman's vision.

**Attraction of Serbia for the Slavs.** In any attempt to solve the problem of the Southern Slavs the question of political primacy as between Serbia and Bulgaria was of course of first importance. Unless a federacy could be formed, bearing some resemblance to that of the German kingdoms and principalities after the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire, some one state, if not restrained by extra-Balkan agencies, would be certain eventually to acquire the upper hand of the rest. If the historical student had been asked, just before

the Great War of 1914, whether Serbia or Bulgaria was entitled by its past achievements, its intelligence, its culture, its national spirit, and its geographical situation to be ranked above the other, the answer would hardly have been doubtful. Bulgaria, while already possessing an eastern seaboard, had gained a maritime exit towards the Mediterranean. But she was less advanced intellectually than Serbia. She was neighbour to fewer Slavic communities which had not yet won their autonomy. Serbia had proved herself a warrior nation of the first order. Her blood is more purely Slavic than that of the Bulgars, who are mainly of remote Scythic origin. Serbia was likely, by the effect of sympathy, of propinquity, of common economic aims, to draw to herself a greater mass of unliberated Slavs. The historical, cultural, military, and racial title to the primacy remained unquestionably hers. She felt strongly the racial appeal of the neighbouring Slavs of the West, North, and South. The union of herself with Montenegro was easily feasible. Indeed the opening of the Austro-Serbian hostilities interrupted negotiations which had almost achieved their object. The dynastic obstacle had been virtually overcome. The union would necessarily have led to the total absorption by the reorganized state of the district of Novi-Bazar, which had been an integral part of what is known as Old Serbia, whereof the most famous portion is the plain of Kossovo. The Slavonians, Croatsians, Dalmatians, Bosnians, Herzegovinians,

and Western Macedonians speak virtually the same tongue. All had aspirations towards the central cradle of the southern branch of their race and towards the nation which had inherited its chief glories.

But the Powers which would have been most disposed to settle the Balkan question in the real interest of the Balkan peoples were destitute of both the acumen and the courage which would have enabled them to do so.

**Vigilance of Austria-Hungary.** Austria-Hungary after, as before the Balkan wars, concentrated her supremest vigilance upon Serbia, from whom she had the most to fear in contravention of her plans of enlargement. She knew that if Serbia obtained a secure footing on the Adriatic or even on the Ægean Sea, it would mean sooner or later the emancipation of all the Southern Slavs. The fact that Austria-Hungary was resolved to prevent her from reaching the sea to the westward, the more obvious direction, rankled sorely in their breasts. All the Slavic provinces of Austria-Hungary were ripe for the Serbian propaganda. It was not necessary that the Serbs of Serbia should themselves be conspicuous in it; but discretion in such a cause was not easy. The propaganda was chiefly directed by a secret society, the Narodna Odbrana, whose central seat was at Belgrade, but whose leading members were found all over the Slavonic provinces to the west and north-west of Serbia proper, and particularly

among the few Slavic instructors in the schools of Bosnia and Croatia. Though the Croats do not greatly love the Serbs, they have every reason to despise the House of Hapsburg. They are the only one of the Slav peoples who stood faithful to Franz Josef in 1848. He rewarded them by placing them under the yoke of Hungary, whose anger against himself he sought to mollify by all the means in his power, except the granting of absolute liberty. In this instance, his ingratitude equalled that which he had displayed towards the Bohemians, who before the battle of Sadowa rejected offers from the Prussian King only to be treated more despotically afterwards than they had been before.

**The Serbian Government and the Narodna.** The Narodna formed military bands in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and trained them in the more destructive methods of warfare. The Austrian Government later accused the Serbian Government of having given its official sanction to the Narodna, of favouring its operations, of permitting officers of the Serbian army to serve it in the capacity of instructors and of allowing the entire Serbian press to incite the Southern Slavs continuously to resist Austrian authority and to scheme for liberation of Austro-Slavic subjects and their absorption by Serbia. The substance of these charges is undoubtedly true, however much they may be exaggerative in detail. The pan-Serbian

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agitation, in the first stage, reached its height about the time that Austria-Hungary, largely because of it, proclaimed the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This act gave her a greater apparent legitimacy in the course of relentless repression upon which she had entered. At the same time it exasperated to deeper intensity the anti-Austrian feeling of the Slavs.

**Serbia forced to bend the knee.** The Serbian Government, had it wished to do so, could not have withstood the desire of its people and the kindred peoples contiguous to them that it should declare itself against this new step in Austria's programme of enslavement. The Serbs appealed to Europe and declared their purpose to make the Austro-Hungarian rule impossible not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in Dalmatia and Croatia. Germany hastened to Austria's aid, and the other Great Powers, obsessed by their old fear of the Great War, which they knew to be sooner or later inevitable, united in deprecating Serbia's attitude. Russia, so soon after her Manchurian losses, did not dare to support her, and she counselled Serbia, therefore, to humble herself before Austria. The Belgrade Government signed an engagement on March 30, 1909, setting forth that the rights of the nation were not transgressed by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that Serbia abandoned her opposition thereto and that she would change her political course in rela-

tion to Austria-Hungary and thenceforth live with her on a neighbourly footing. An ostensible accommodation, thus forced, could not but render more violent the underlying motives of mutual hate and distrust. No one, knowing these motives, could have regarded it as other than a hollow makeshift, which, unless the temper of both the nations, parties to it, should change as by a miracle, would prove the prelude to a quarrel of a yet more dangerous character.

**Bitter repression in Bosnia-Herzegovina.** The Serbian propaganda could not be arrested in this manner. Its real activity was rather increased than diminished. The Serbian Government sought naturally to avoid any open commitment to the pro-Slavic agitation; but the effects of the agitation were more and more apparent. After its long record of injustice and cruelty, it is more than doubtful that the Austrian authority could now have entirely conciliated the Slavs of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina by any means whatever, even the most reasonable, while keeping them under its flag. Of course, it attempted nothing of the sort. There were never lacking pretexts for continuous suspensions of the constitution which, with great pretence of liberality, it had given to the annexed provinces in 1910. The military exercised civil power, and the most bitter repressive measures were enforced. Education was hardly permitted, except in the Catholic



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schools, under masters who were either Austro-German or had pronounced Germanic sympathies. The efforts of the government were steadily directed to Germanizing the country. The important industries were nearly all in the hands of Germans or Austro-Germans. Many thousands of Slavs were driven to emigrate to make room for men of the Germanic race. In this policy, so closely patterned upon that of the Prusso-German Kaiser in his Polish provinces, the Austro-German Kaiser received from the former the heartiest encouragement. Whether or not the leading Austro-German statesmen fully recognized the vast scope and the ulterior object of the pan-Germanic agitation whose centre was at Berlin, it is certain that it greatly influenced the Austro-German elements in the Vienna Government. The head of the Hapsburg House, whether consciously or unconsciously, worked for the realization of Wilhelm's greater dream, the reversion of Germanic Austria and the Germanized provinces of the Austrian Empire, with as much more as could be grasped, to the Hohenzollerns—the Holy Roman Empire completely reconstituted, in an enforced union of more absolute type, under the hegemony of semi-Slavic Prussia.<sup>1</sup>

**Austria's fear of Serbian expansion.** Serbia's great increase of prestige and power by reason of

<sup>1</sup> The Prussians or Borussians were originally immigrants or conquerors from the north-east of Europe.

the two Balkan wars, while she remained landlocked as before, and had been disappointed in a practical ambition which was of the utmost significance as to her final destiny, appeared to the jealous eyes of the Austro-Hungarians as a new and unpardonable affront. Indeed it rendered distinctly worse the situation of the Imperial Government in regard to its Slavic subjects. The tendency of these populations to gravitate towards Serbian unity was now stronger than ever. It was evident to any one who saw somewhat beneath the surface that Austrian inaction at this juncture would mean Austrian ruin, long in advance of the period generally fixed for that catastrophe in the calculations of men. If Austria lost her Slavonic subjects, secession by the Magyars (if not domination), and by the Tzechs, the cis-Carpathian Rumanians and other constituent groups of the imperial agglomeration might well be expected. The majority of these were held to her by economic ties stronger than the force of armies or the dynastic tradition; but with the modern ease of transportation, economic relations were less difficult of re-adjustment than they had been at any other epoch. A greater Serbia, with seaboard cities and modernized harbours, would have given a stimulus to the commercial communications of the Southern Slavs with the outer world that they were unlikely ever to know under the warped

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racial favouritisms of the Austro-Hungarian régime.

**Italy's views as to Albania.** Italy's antagonism to Serbian expansion to the blue western waters was an essential element of her tacit understanding with Austria-Hungary as to the control of the Adriatic; but there was nothing in the history of this understanding to indicate, if once the relative power of Austria-Hungary had been greatly diminished and that of Serbia as greatly augmented, that Italy would have continued indefinitely in the same obstructive attitude towards the latter. Rather would her desire to annex the southern half of Albania, with as little trouble as possible, have caused her to admit the logic and justice of Serbia's maritime ambition.

The passion of egoism which possessed the Austro-Hungarian rulers was wrought up to the highest pitch by these considerations. It was the same passion of egoism which militarism and pan-Germanism had cultivated and fertilized in the other Teutonic Empire until, as a gigantic sinister plant, it threatened death, even as did the legendary tree of Java, to all who came within its shade. Austria-Hungary watched once more for the occasion to impose her will upon Serbia. Her will in this instance, as clearly appeared from the nature of her diplomatic procedure, was that Serbia should be exasperated to the point of reckless defiance. As originally drawn the demand

was to exceed so immeasurably in its humiliating quality the two former ones to which she had acceded (renunciation of all opposition to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a promise of "neighbourly" behaviour in the future, and renunciation of northern Albania and a port on the Adriatic, after conquest), that she must either reject it and engage in war against vast numerical odds, or in yielding to it resign herself to implied vassalage, internal anarchy, revolution, and intervention (synonymous with conquest) and possibly final extinction as an autonomous nation. It was well known at Vienna and Berlin that no Serbian Government could accept this third humiliation and live.

**Magnitude of the Pan-Serbian movement.**

The pan-Slavic agitation was aggravated by the Austro-Hungarian pretensions in the Novi-Bazar district. The propaganda in Bosnia-Herzegovina had not been even interrupted by Serbia's ostensible surrender of principle. Austria-Hungary still affected to hold her responsible. The absurdity of this was apparent. The movement was chiefly carried on among 12,000,000 Slavs and their leaders, outside of the Serbian boundaries. The Serbian Government had no direct control of them. What secret influence it had over them was, of course, a wholly speculative matter. Serbia could no more have arrested this work than she could have stopped the sap in the

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forest-trees in its vernal rise. But Austria hugged the contrary assumption, knowing undoubtedly that it was false. In all this there was the technical advantage of a plausible lie, consistently upheld, against all comers.

Hungary was as much incensed against Serbia as was Austria proper. It is to Hungary that the Slavic populations of Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina directly belonged, under the politic apportionment made by the Imperial Government. It was again needful, in 1909, as it had been in 1848, to flatter the pride and to favour the special interests of the Magyars. If regarded in the light of her eventual hope of independence or of political pre-eminence, Hungary had an even stronger motive than had Austria for curbing the growth of Serbia, especially in the direction of the Adriatic. The part that Hungary was to fill in the dynastic crisis which many believed to be certain after Franz Josef's death, was self-indicated.

**The personality of Franz Ferdinand.** History must take large account of the personality of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir-presumptive to the double throne of Austria-Hungary. His conception of the true destiny of the Empire was not that of the old Emperor, his uncle, nor of the latter's counsellors. But it was more logical and even more humane than that on which the expansion of the Empire had been based, since 1848. The dynasty, he knew, was the sole political

principle which caused the widely differing elements of the Empire to cohere. He believed in respecting, at least in a certain sense, the national feeling of each of the races which were joined together under the Hapsburg Crown. It appeared to him of great importance to placate the Slavic population of Austria proper and to avoid further political provocation to the populations that had been annexed since 1878. He had urged the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a step in the direction of the great political achievement which he had in view; but, once the annexation effected, he had hoped to win the Slavs of those provinces to a personal regard for himself and his house. The extreme course of Germanization in Croatia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina was no part of his policy. He would have solved the Austro-Slavic question, if possible, by erecting a new kingdom out of the Slavic provinces of the Empire, together with the present realm of Serbia, and by giving it a status similar to that of Hungary. Thus there would have been a triple monarchy, instead of a double one.

**To save the Hapsburg monarchy.** This plan might have borne good fruit, if sufficient time had been available for working it out. It was perhaps the only one which could by any chance have saved the Hapsburg monarchy, if carried out in a liberal and benevolent spirit. Whether the Hereditary Prince was capable of that can

hardly be judged; so little is known of the ultimate possibilities of his character. But there are many grounds of doubt. It is uncertain as to what means he would have employed. His was an austere and unyielding nature, fearless and resolute; one to be entirely set aside, eliminated by superior forces, or else to dominate all his surroundings. He was fitted for soldierly deeds, perhaps to be a great leader, being likely to impose his will upon others or break in the attempt. He was greatly beloved by the army, because, with a most stern conception of military duty, he was yet human in his sympathies and appreciative of sacrifice in others. He appears to have been as genuine and as substantial in his princely rôle as Wilhelm II. was artificial and theatrically self-conscious in his. The romantic story of hismorganatic marriage with her whom the Emperor Franz Josef afterwards raised to the rank of duchess illustrates his manliness, the independence of his character, his strong will, and his loyal affection. The union was against the wish of his Imperial uncle. It flouted the arrogant prejudices of the proudest and most punctilious Court of Europe. It even endangered his succession to the crown, and unquestionably influenced some of the circumstances which led to his tragic end. He could not be moved from his purpose to make the Countess Chatek his wife. To render it the more sure he even renounced the claim of his posterity

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to imperial and royal rights. It is true that doubts were raised as to the legal effect of this renunciation, and these doubts made more bitter the hostility shown him by the pro-German and anti-Slav intriguers at Vienna and at Budapest. But the good faith of Franz Ferdinand was not seriously questioned. It may be accepted as evidence of his conception of the political rôle which he seemed destined to fill as above that of mere personal glory and advantage.

**Kaiser Wilhelm's dislike.** There was never either temperamental or moral sympathy between the German Kaiser and the Archduke, and in the end they cordially detested each other. The idea of the future of the Austrian Empire which was cherished by the latter was directly contrary to Kaiser Wilhelm's glittering dream of an all-absorbing pan-Germanism. The scheme of the Slavic kingdom within the Austrian imperial system, if realized, would have ended forever Germany's hope of continuing to use Austria as a chief tool to her own absurdly selfish ends; would have prevented her from deriving the chief profit from the anticipated politico-economic subjection of the Balkan peoples, and very likely would have been fatal also to her giant project of dominating Asia Minor and thus sapping both the Asiatic and the African empire of Great Britain.

**Quarrel between the Kaiser and the Archduke.** It is not possible to say just how large



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was the scope of Franz Ferdinand's scheme, but certain writers attributed to him the hope even of annexing a part of Russia's southern domain, in a forced repartition of Europe. But he disapproved of the German policy of excessive armament; of sacrificing every economic and moral interest of a people to the one object of military supremacy. He did not share in Germany's bitter antagonism to England and France. The enemy upon whom his thoughts were most fixed was Russia, and after Russia the Serbian monarchy. Wilhelm was enraged at this divergence from his own theory of co-operation between the central empires. He had made remarkable efforts, we are told, to overcome a natural antipathy to the Archduke, an antipathy that was mutual. Their outward relations at last had given him hope that he might control the latter's chief policies, after his coming to the throne, as he already controlled those of the aged Emperor, Franz Josef. But this hope was rudely exploded. The last interview between the Kaiser and the Archduke, a few days before the latter was slain at Sarajevo, was most stormy. Franz Ferdinand objected to the course of adventure upon which Germany wished to embark in company with Austria-Hungary, and also to the programme of greatly increased military preparation which Kaiser Wilhelm desired the latter to adopt, in accord with the latest development of his own war policy.

**Seeking a pretext for attacking Serbia.** The extreme militarists of the Austrian Empire and the party in Hungary which had laboured incessantly for the ascendancy of the Magyars were inimical to the political ideas of the Hereditary Prince. He appears to have made no secret of his deep dislike of the Hungarians in general, nor they of their entirely reciprocal sentiment. In so far as a Slavic Kingdom within the Austrian Empire might be great, the Hungarian Kingdom would certainly suffer in relative power and influence. But the politicians opposed to the Hereditary Prince were in entire sympathy with the plan, strongly advocated at Berlin, of finding or creating a pretext for subjecting the Serbians by force, even at the risk of setting the whole of Europe aflame. When Franz Ferdinand refused to give his countenance to this enterprise, Kaiser Wilhelm caused the fact to be instantly telegraphed to the government at Budapest, whose chief, Count Tisza, had already proved his complete willingness to play into his hands.

Meanwhile the plot to assassinate the Hereditary Prince was cunningly woven. That the Serbian Government was entirely innocent of it may well be believed. It would have had far too much to risk and nothing at all to gain in rendering itself in any wise responsible for such a crime. Those who undertook to kill the Hereditary Prince were not its subjects, but subjects of Austria-

Hungary. Proof was lacking of the part alleged to have been borne by Major Tankosic of the Serbian army, in the preparation of the murder. But even if such proof existed it would not make more probable the assumed guilt of the Serbian Government. There was a much stronger motive for the crime in the fierce hatred of the Archduke on the part of the Bosnians than in any sentiment of the Serbians themselves. That there was a plot to assassinate was known at Vienna and Budapest as well as at Belgrade. It was common talk in the streets of the Hungarian capital. The Serbian Government sent early warning to the imperial authorities. This was proof of loyalty and of humane solicitude. No word of it, however, was mentioned to the Archduke, nor was any effort made to dissuade him from his proposed visit to Sarajevo. And no effective steps were taken to protect him. He knew, however, that he was to be attacked, and that the Court party had abandoned him to his fate.

**The Assassination at Sarajevo.** From the moment that the Archduke entered Bosnia he was doomed. The kind of pan-Slavism which was his own peculiar concept found no echo in the breasts of the Southern Slavs. He was doubly hated for this and for the Austro-Hungarian tyranny of the past, present, and future. The Duchess of Hohenburg knew also of his danger. She insisted upon accompany-

ing him to the capital of Bosnia and throughout the ceremonial functions that were to mark his presence there. The souls of this noble couple seemed to be perfectly suited to each other. The cool courage of the Prince was admirable; but more so was the heroic devotion of his wife. After a state reception at the town-hall, a loaded bomb was hurled at them by Nedeljko Gabrinovic, a typographer, as they were passing in an automobile through the principal street. The Archduke, with a quick gesture, fended the missile and it fell under the motor-car which was following, wounding his military aide and another officer of his suite, and several spectators. Neither the Archduke nor his wife showed the least trepidation. They continued their progress through the city. The Archduke's evident design was to place himself upon a more personal footing with his future subjects. It was, in fact, characteristic tender for popularity. Suddenly a young man, a student, Gabrilo Princip, from the town of Grakhovo, the scene of a famous Montenegrin victory over the Turks, sprang out of the crowd and fired several pistol-shots at the Prince. The Duchess had seen the first tragic movement of the assassin and had thrown herself between him and her husband. One ball pierced the latter's head and another her own abdomen. They both expired before any surgical help could be given them. The would-be assassin and the actual assassin were secured.

**Sinister prognostic in Europe.** The tidings of this crime sent a sinister thrill throughout the world. Many organs of public opinion in Europe voiced the apprehension of terrible consequences. Still immediately afterwards there was an apparent lull in diplomatic activities. The public was for a brief season deceived. This quietude concealed something even more sinister than the crime itself: the preparation of a greater crime.

From the moment that the fate of the Hereditary Prince was known, the royal Hungarian Government, in sharp contrast to its former indifference, began to urge upon the Imperial Government at Vienna that it take extreme measures against Serbia, as presumably responsible for the assassination. Count Tisza was particularly ardent in such advocacy.

**Responsibility for the crime.** There was a singular parallelism in the crime itself, its prompt utilization by the Magyar party of which Count Tisza was the active chief, and the quickly revealed purpose of Kaiser Wilhelm, in harmonious understanding with the former, to bring the question of Teutonic supremacy in Europe to a head and to an affirmative solution. Certain writers declared, and others will doubtless again declare, that the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were "wantonly sent to their death," and that the Prusso-German Kaiser and his ministers were indirectly, if not knowingly, responsible for the

crime. A like charge would lie perhaps more nearly at the door of Count Tisza, the Hungarian first-minister, and of the Magyar party, whose guilty motives could easily have been understood, if translated into action. Signs of relief "in certain circles" at the news of the killing, it was said, were manifest at both Vienna and Budapest. By many the reported exclamation of the Archduke, immediately after the first attempt in Sarajevo, "Somebody will be decorated for this!" was regarded as an accusation.

The responsibility for the crime can, perhaps, be most justly apportioned among the four capitals: Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, and Belgrade. It is certain, on the one hand, that the conservative monarchists in Austria-Hungary looked upon Franz Ferdinand as an undesirable successor to his uncle, and a danger to the Empire and the dynasty; and on the other, that the Archduke, as Princip, the assassin, declared, "held the first place among those who were hated by the Serbs, being looked upon as the sworn enemy of all Serbian aspirations, and as having vowed to destroy Serbia and the Serbian monarchy."

**Germany's and Austria's opportunity.** The trembling equilibrium of Europe had been roughly shaken by the Balkan wars. Berlin and Vienna were now intent upon totally upsetting that equilibrium. Germany's sullen hostility to the Triple Entente had found the supreme occasion

for venting itself. It was to be proven that Austria-Hungary could not stomach her disappointment at being barred from the coveted port of Salonika and the possession of Macedonia. She had clung to her military occupation of Novi-Bazar, severing Montenegro from Serbia, until the question of Albanian autonomy had been settled, but she had never abandoned her hope of eventually acquiring both it and Serbia. The prediction of the French historian, the late Albert Sorel, had virtually come true: "We have laboured for a century to solve the Eastern Question. On the day when it is believed that it has been solved, Europe will see the Austrian Question arise, inevitable." He might have termed it more accurately the Germano-Hungarian Question.

## CHAPTER III

### IMPERIOUS PRESUMPTION OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY ABETTED BY GERMANY—REJECTION OF ALL REASONABLE TERMS

Unexampled Demands upon Serbia—A War of Aggression Desired by the Central Empires—The Menace of 1913—Crafty Choice of the Final Occasion—Effort to Cajole Great Britain—Russia's Prompt Definition of her Attitude—Serbia Advised to Submit, by Russia, France, Britain, and Italy, in so far as Was Consistent with her National Honour—Austria-Hungary's Perfidious Assurances—Her Ultimatum Amended by Kaiser Wilhelm—Threats to France and England—Serbia Proposes Arbitration on Two Important Points—Military Ardour in Austria-Hungary and Germany—Partition of Serbia Planned—Germany Consistently Resists all Efforts for Peace—Reprieve to Serbia Denied and her Answer Flouted, as by Previous Resolve—Evidence of the Insincerity of the Diplomatic Utterances of the Central Allies—They Try to Bring about Discord among the Opposing Powers—Frank Attempt of Russia to Negotiate Directly with Austria, who Seeks to Gain Time—Refusal of Direct Negotiation, and Serbia Attacked.

**M**ORE than three weeks elapsed between the assassination at Sarajevo and Austria-Hungary's definitive pronouncement regarding it. Although the latter's ultimatum had been expected, its terms were a



surprise. Austria-Hungary demanded of Serbia the most abject self-humiliation that was possible, short of physical surrender. She virtually summoned her to confess her responsibility for the murder of the Archduke and his wife, and temporarily to abandon her right of sovereignty to the extent of permitting Austro-Hungarian officials to carry on an inquiry within her territory and of dismissing such of her officers and functionaries as it might seem good to the Austro-Hungarian Government to designate. These were the most onerous demands. But the whole document was of the same imperious tenor. The date was the 23d of July and the Austro-Hungarian Government exacted an answer within forty-eight hours.

**Details of the Austrian ultimatum.** In this comminatory note, the Vienna ministry began by asserting that the Serbian Government, far from fulfilling its formal promise, made on the 31st of March, 1909, to "modify the direction of its policy" with reference to Austria-Hungary, and to live with her on "good, neighbourly terms," had done nothing to arrest the movement born in Serbia to detach from the Empire certain parts of its territory, but had tolerated the criminal activities of various societies and "affiliations" inimical thereto; had permitted "unbridled language on the part of the press," the "glorification of the perpetrators of anti-Austrian crimes"; the participation of Serbian officers and function-

aries in "subversive methods of action"; an "unwholesome propaganda" in the guise of public instruction; in fact, had sanctioned, if not in an active, at least in a passive sense, every manifestation which could lead the Serbian population to hatred of the Empire and contempt of its institutions.

The note continued:

It results from the depositions and confessions of the authors of the crime of the 28th of June last that it was plotted at Belgrade; that the arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided were given them by Serbian officers and functionaries, members of the Narodna Odbrana, and, lastly, that the passage of the criminals and their weapons into Bosnia was arranged and effected by chiefs of the Serbian frontier service.

**Humiliating exactions.** The Austro-Hungarian Government prescribed a declaration, to be published three days later on the first page of the Serbian official journal, wherein the Serbian Government should condemn as criminal the anti-Austro-Hungarian propaganda and earnestly deplore its sinister consequences; express regret that Serbian officers and functionaries had taken part in it, thereby compromising the good and neighbourly relations to which it had solemnly pledged itself; declare that it disapproved and repudiated all idea of interfering or attempting

to interfere with "the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatever of Austria-Hungary"; and that it deemed it its duty formally to warn the officers and functionaries and the entire population of the Kingdom that henceforth it would proceed with the utmost rigour against all who should be guilty of such actions, which it would prevent and repress by every means in its power. This declaration should be simultaneously communicated to the Serbian army in an order signed by the King, and published in the official journal.

**Surrender of sovereignty.** Furthermore, the Serbian Government was to pledge itself (1) to suppress every publication within its domain which aroused hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and in general tended to assail its territorial integrity; (2) to dissolve immediately the Narodna Odbrana and all other anti-Austro-Hungarian societies and their branches, and to confiscate all their means of propaganda and prevent the continuance of their activities under any other form; (3) to eliminate without delay all instructors and all educational matter which served or might serve to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary; (4) to remove from the military service and from administrative posts in general all officers and functionaries guilty of such propaganda, and whose names and doings the Imperial Government should later communicate to the Serbian Government; (5) to accept the

collaboration of representatives of the Imperial Government in the suppression of the movement to deprive Austria-Hungary of a part of her territory; (6) to take measures of judicial inquiry against the accessories to the plot of the 28th of June who might be found on Serbian soil, and in the researches relative to whom official delegates of the Imperial Government should take part; (7) to proceed with all diligence to the arrest of Commandant (Major) Voija Tankosic and one Milan Ciganovic, employee of the Serbian State implicated in the Sarajevo murders; (8) to take effective measures to prevent the Serbian functionaries from co-operating in the illicit traffic of arms and explosives across the frontier; and to dismiss and punish severely the frontier officials of Schabatz and Loznica who had been guilty of aiding the authors of the Sarajevo murders, by facilitating their entry into Bosnia; (9) to make apology for the unjustifiable utterances of high official personages both in Serbia and abroad, who, after the crime of the 28th of June, in spite of their governmental positions, did not hesitate to express themselves in terms of hostility towards the Austro-Hungarian monarchy; and (10) to inform the Imperial Government without delay of the carrying out of all of these measures.

**Europe expected Austria to abate her demands.** Since civilized procedure was known, no such summons, insolent, so arrogant and unreasona-

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ble, had ever been addressed by one nation to another.

It was the common opinion of Europe that Austria-Hungary could not adhere to the extraordinary terms of her note; and that, first of all, she must consent to a prolongation of the interval allowed for the Serbian response. It was not then generally known, as later it was, and by most convincing proofs,<sup>1</sup> that the step taken had long been minutely prearranged by the Vienna and Berlin governments, as necessary to the carrying out of their joint policies in the Balkans, and of their ulterior views in regard to Turkey and Asia Minor. It was, indeed, the culmination of the vast aggressive plan of Germany, long contemplated and long prepared. Germany's steady endeavour, since the formation of the double alliance of 1880,<sup>2</sup> had been to use the Austro-Hungarian ambitions to further her own. Encouraged by Germany, Austria-Hungary had carefully awaited, and had partly created, her opportunity. Both of those Powers were inclined

<sup>1</sup> The Russian ambassador and the Belgian minister at London both expressed the opinion (24th of July) that Austria-Hungary would never have sent her ultimatum to Serbia without a preliminary agreement with Germany relative thereto. The German ambassador at Paris declared on the same day that Austria-Hungary had presented her note to Serbia without any "precise" understanding with Berlin; but that nevertheless Germany fully approved of Austria's point of view. Especial emphasis in the above belongs to the word "precise."

<sup>2</sup> Between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

to believe that this opportunity had arrived when, in 1913, Austria insisted that Albania must be constituted an autonomous state, and Germany was using all of her diplomatic influence to cause a German prince to be placed on the newly erected throne. France was warned that a general order preliminary to mobilization had been issued from Berlin, and once more the great conflict seemed perilously near.<sup>1</sup> Germany was ready to inflict a terrific surprise upon France, as again she was in the following year. But the Great Powers, outside of the Triple Alliance, did not deem that the Albanian question concerned them intimately enough to be worth the embroilment of the whole of Europe. What seemed the clearer opportunity came in 1914. As viewed by the leading minds of the two Central Empires, the state of Europe would probably never again, in the present cycle, be so favourable to the great enterprise, whereof the general object was firmly to establish the Germanic superiority, the fruits of which, in political advantage and material profit might be expected to exceed all previous imaginings.

**Crafty choice of occasion.** The precise hour itself appears to have been craftily chosen. Serbia and the other Balkan states were largely exhausted by their recent wars. Serbia, who by force had

<sup>1</sup> It was for this reason that the German Kronprinz abandoned his intended voyage in the steamship *Imperator*, when she underwent her first transatlantic trial.

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taken from Bulgaria a part of the territorial spoil which fell to her under the terms of the Balkan League, could not yet be easy as to a possible attempt to recover it. France had recognized the insufficiency of her own military preparations; but the leaders of her factions were divided as to the wisdom, in order to perfect them, of asking the people to assume a heavier burden. The nation had not enough of heavy artillery; the supply of rifles and of munitions in general was short; the strengthening or reconstruction of certain northern fortresses had been foolishly neglected. The reorganization of the army, under the three-years service law, passed in 1913, was not yet complete. On the other hand, a splendid revival of the national spirit, together with practical measures of military reform, either begun or in contemplation, served as a renewed warning to the hereditary enemy that the hour of attempted vengeance, whether it were hastened or not, was inevitable.

German statesmen and military experts thoroughly believed that Russia was still far from having recovered from the disastrous effects of her struggle with Japan, and that this, with the disquieting state of her internal politics, would cause her either to decline or to evade the joint challenge of her Imperial neighbours. It was not thought in Berlin that the Russian armies, stupendous in numbers as they might be, could seriously oppose

the skilled onsets of German troops, drilled with most rigorous care and provided with the most elaborate equipment of destructive arms and apparatus that military science had yet devised. As a possible participant in the coming Great War, Britain was more feared than Russia, not, indeed, because of her military prowess on land, which was viewed with some contempt, but of her undoubted ability to annihilate German foreign commerce and to cut off the German importations of foodstuffs and munitions. Hence the cajoling tone of German diplomacy towards England. Better superficial relations, indeed, had been established. But the lack of sincerity on the German side was plainly felt. Berlin hugged to itself the illusion that the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was too greatly embarrassed by the imminence of an armed struggle over the issue of separate parliamentary government for the latter country to dare to obtrude herself into a war of the Continental Powers. This misconception of the spirit of both Great Britain and Ireland was one of the remarkable features of the mental attitude of the Germans.

**The chancellories taken by surprise.** There were also facts of less importance which seem to have influenced the Austro-Hungarian and German Governments in the choice of their hour. The Russian Ambassador, when the crisis declared itself, had left Vienna on a brief vacation.



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He had been assured by Count Berchtold that no extraordinary demands would be made upon Serbia and that there was no immediate prospect, therefore, of diplomatic tension; the Serbian Prime Minister, Pachitch, was absent from Belgrade; the President of the French Republic, Raymond Poincaré, with the head of the ministry, René Viviani, was in the Baltic region, having paid a visit, ceremonial and political, to the Russian Tsar. In view of these coincidences, the delay of forty-eight hours allowed to Serbia by Austria-Hungary in her ultimatum appears to have been most astutely calculated.

**Appeal of the Serbian Prince Regent.** The other Great Powers, interested in the Near-East question, acted with both energy and discretion. In these respects, Germany and Austria-Hungary must have found their prognostics somewhat at fault. The Prince Regent of Serbia immediately addressed an appeal to the Tsar of Russia, asking the support of his government.

We are ready [he said in his despatch] to accept such of the Austro-Hungarian conditions as are compatible with the situation of an independent state and those that your Majesty shall counsel us to accept. The delay given us is too short. We may be attacked by the Austro-Hungarian army which is concentrating on our border. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves. We entreat your Majesty to come as speedily as possible to our aid.

**Prompt action by Russia.** Sazonof, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, forthwith instructed the embassy at Vienna to declare that the time allowed to Serbia was insufficient and to ask for its extension. Britain and France joined in this demand, and Russia informed all the Great Powers that she could not view with indifference a conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. The next day Italy, the third member of the Triple Alliance, was indirectly asked to impress the fact upon the Vienna Government that Russia would certainly be obliged to go to the aid of Serbia, if the latter were attacked. The Austro-Hungarian Premier, Count Berchtold, was in conference with the Emperor, Franz Josef, at Ischl, in Upper Austria. He returned by telegraph a categorical refusal to the request for further time.<sup>1</sup>

**Germany and Italy asked to intervene.** The next step of Britain, France, and Russia was to try to induce Germany and Italy to intervene in favour of peace. The German Ambassador at London, Prince Lichnowski, informed Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, that his government declined to interfere between Serbia and Austria-Hungary. Italy answered that she would take part in efforts for the maintenance of peace, but that she wished to keep aloof from the conflict which might ensue. San Giuliano, the

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of the Russian chargé d'affaires at Vienna, 25th of July.

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Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, sought loyally to persuade the Austrian Government to ask nothing of Serbia that she could not readily grant, and not to press for a judicial inquest within the Serbian jurisdiction as to the causes of the Sarajevo murders. Sir Edward Grey, in a conversation with the Austrian Ambassador in London, also counselled prudence and moderation, and that nothing should be required of Serbia which she could not reasonably grant. The representations made on behalf of France at Vienna were exactly in the same sense. As early as the 6th of July, Sazonof had told the Austrian Ambassador at Saint Petersburg that his government ought not to seek in Serbia for the instigators of the crime. Russia, he said, had never put forth a like pretension, although she had suffered notably from crimes plotted in other countries.

Never before, on the threshold of a great crisis, perhaps, were such strenuous and earnest efforts made to avert it.

**Germany affects to be confident of peace.** The three Powers which had no immediate interest in the difference between Austria and Serbia had begun, very soon after the tragedy of Sarajevo, and before it was even known that the question had reached an acute stage, to impress the former with their anxious and urgent desire that it should be settled without resort to arms. The German Government, for its part, affected to believe that

this would be so, declaring itself confident that Serbia would give fitting satisfaction, since otherwise, in the words of an under-secretary of foreign affairs at Berlin, "she would have against her the opinion of the whole civilized world." Thus early were intimated Germany's prejudgment of the case and her knowledge of what was to be exacted. The Belgrade Government, nevertheless, had given notice at Berlin that it would be "dangerous (in this crisis) to affront the prestige of Serbia." The Russian Foreign Minister warned the Austrian Government that the Tsar could not regard the Sarajevo assassination as a suitable pretext for military operations on Serbian soil. It may be concluded that if Austria and Germany, therefore, did not at the beginning take adequate account of the peril which they were evoking, it must have been because of wilful, or else of inexplicable, blindness.

**Danger of brutal pressure upon Serbia.** Two weeks later the French Ambassador at Berlin, Jules Cambon, informed his government that he had most serious reasons for believing that Germany would strongly support Austria-Hungary at Belgrade in any step which the latter might deem necessary, in consequence of the Sarajevo murders, but that she would refrain from any efforts at mediation. This prevision, it has been seen, was fully confirmed by the event. And it clearly argues the complete understanding of the imperial allies

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as to the character of the step that was to be taken at Belgrade. On the following day, the 22d of July, the French Government ordered its Ambassador, M. Dumaine, to make friendly, but emphatic, representations at Vienna of Europe's desire for peace and of the dangerous effect which a brutal pressure upon Serbia might have.

A secret report to the French Government from its consul-general at Vienna foreshadowed in detail the demands to be made upon Serbia: that she was to become in her own domain "the policeman of a foreign Power"; that the note addressed to her was to be so imperious and so insolent in tone that its rejection was almost certain, and that the result thereof would be war. Nevertheless, according to the ambassador, the general public, even in Vienna, when the demands became known, was surprised at their suddenness and their exaggeration. Nearly all the foreign diplomatists, except von Tschirschky, the German representative, were ignorant of the fact that the note was ready, and of its contents.

**Austria-Hungary's perfidious assurances.** Upon its publication, on the 24th of July, the studied hypocrisy of Austria-Hungary and Germany began to appear. The former, up to the evening of its despatch, gave continued assurance of its moderate tendency. Ten days before that, in governmental circles in Budapest, there had been an affectation of optimism; but the public

was fearful of war, although the newspapers were crying peace; and meanwhile cannon and munitions were moving towards the southern frontier. Eight army corps had already been designated for the proposed campaign. The purpose of treating Serbia like another Poland was openly attributed to the Viennese Government.

In spite of his own statement, on the 20th, that his government, "as a safeguard during the period of tension," had issued preliminary notices of mobilization, von Jagow, the German Foreign Secretary, protested to Jules Cambon and to the Russian representative at Berlin that he was absolutely ignorant of the contents of the forthcoming Austrian note. He went so far even as to say that he was "astonished at a declaration so little in accord with what the circumstances would have led one to expect."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An authoritative writer in the *Journal des Débats*, Paris, 26th of September, 1914, said: "The foreign offices of Vienna and Berlin have ceaselessly accused those of Saint Petersburg and London of duplicity. They dared to reproach Russia with having mobilized clandestinely, under cover of feigned assurances of moderation. They heaped falsehood upon falsehood. The German ambassadors declared that their government had had no knowledge of the Austrian note before its despatch to Belgrade and had exercised no influence whatever over its contents. . . . It has been proved that the unexampled terms of that provocative paper were minutely elaborated by the authorized representatives of the two Powers. The ambassadors of Franz Josef, for their part, used language which was equally hypocritical. While secret mobilization was being carried on throughout the Empire, they explained that the character of an ultimatum should not

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**German Ambassador an advocate of extreme measures.** In juxtaposition to these statements must be placed the following facts: That the German Ambassador at Vienna had shown himself a violent advocate of extreme measures against Serbia and had betrayed an intimate knowledge of the probable character of those measures; that the president of the Bavarian ministerial council, according to his own voluntary statement, was aware of the contents of the Austrian note as early at least as the 23d of July, and that on the previous day a German semi-official newspaper had announced that the Kaiser's government had been "informed of its scope," and that it had met with approval at Berlin. On the 24th, von Jagow, with remarkable promptitude, declared to foreign diplomatists that he approved of it. The French Ambassador wrote: "Not less striking is the care with which von Jagow and all the functionaries under his orders affect to tell everybody that they had no previous knowledge of its scope."<sup>1</sup>

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be attributed to Count Berchtold's note. Decidedly, on the lips of the agents of Wilhelm II. and Franz Josef, words are entirely bereft of meaning."

Sir M. de Bunsen, the British Ambassador at Vienna, reported to his government on the 30th of July: "I have it from a private source . . . that the German Ambassador knew the text of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia before it was despatched and that he telegraphed it to the German Emperor. I know from the German Ambassador himself that he approved of it in its every line."

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of Schebeko, Russian Ambassador at Vienna, 27th

**Kaiser Wilhelm amends the ultimatum.** There was a certain degree of merely technical truth in those protestations. But the general character of the proposed ultimatum was certainly known at the German Foreign Office before it was drawn up. This task was performed at Vienna by Count Tisza, the Premier of the Hungarian Kingdom, with the collaboration of the Austro-Hungarian Premier, Count Berchtold, and von Tschirschky, the German Ambassador. The text was telegraphed to Kaiser Wilhelm, ostentatiously absent from Berlin and Potsdam at the time, for his criticism and approbation. The Kaiser made some amendments to the wording of the document, in the direction of greater severity, so that the chance of evasion on the part of Serbia was minimized. It was he who fixed at forty-eight hours the limit of time for the response.<sup>1</sup>

The partial ignorance of the German Foreign Office of the terms of the ultimatum was wholly intentional. It was an element of the elaborate plan to deceive Europe, and even the German people themselves, as to the real nature of the origin of the Great War which was now to be inflicted upon the world.

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of July: "It must be supposed that Austria, under the influence of assurances from the German representative, who during the whole of this crisis has played the part of instigator, has counted upon the localization of her conflict with Serbia, and on the possibility of striking with impunity a severe blow at the latter."

<sup>1</sup> *A Scrap of Paper*, by Dr. E. J. Dillon, pp. 76-77.



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**Germany's threat to France and Britain.** At Berlin, multiple signs pointed to the premeditated purpose of the German Government to make the cause of Austria-Hungary its own. The German ambassadors at London, Saint Petersburg, and Paris, on the 24th of July, communicated to the governments to which they were accredited a memorandum from their ministerial chief wherein it was sought to justify in all particulars the attitude and demands of Austria-Hungary. This document ended in what was clearly and intentionally a threat, to the effect that interference by any third Power in the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia would lead (in view of certain treaty obligations) to "incalculable consequences." Those treaty obligations were, of course, the formal bonds of alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

It had been arranged that pacific advice was to be given to Austria-Hungary and Serbia by Britain, France, and Italy, in concert. The news of the ultimatum changed the whole complexion of the case. The Austrian course was denounced in high quarters as unmoral. A set and deliberate design was evident, on the part of the Central Empires, to override every ideal of international justice.

But the counter-endeavour to avoid or postpone the Great War was not to be abandoned. Every diplomatic recourse was first to be exhausted.

From the commencement of the crisis, France,

Britain, and Russia were agreed that nothing dishonouring to Serbia, or which lessened her dignity or her sovereign rights, should be exacted from her. But Austria-Hungary and Germany were apparently determined to dishonour Serbia most flagrantly, to impair her dignity, and to violate her sovereignty, perhaps irretrievably. Face to face with obvious indices of ill-will and of disregard, on the part of the Central Empires, Germany and Austria-Hungary, of the well-being of all other nations, France, Britain, and Russia persevered in their almost hopeless task. A candid study of the documents embodying the substance of these negotiations is most convincing of the entire sincerity of those three Powers, as well as of the mad and audacious selfishness of Austria-Hungary and Germany.

**Pacific advice to Serbia.** The next recourse was further pacific advice to Serbia. Immediately after the Austrian note became known, the representatives of the Triple Entente urged simultaneously upon Serbia the wisdom of giving to Austria-Hungary as great satisfaction as she could, with due regard to her own self-respect. Serbia implicitly followed this advice. Her response to Austria-Hungary was conceived in the most conciliatory terms, going indeed to the very verge of abject humility, yet no further. She denied the charges of the Imperial Government, but subscribed finally in effect to all but two of the essential conditions dictated by the latter: the ac-

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ceptance by Serbia of the collaboration of agents of the Imperial Government in the suppression of the movement to deprive Austria-Hungary of a portion of her territory; and the obligation on the part of Serbia to admit Austria-Hungary to a share in the judicial measures to be taken against the supposed accomplices of the Sarajevo assassins. The Serbian Government professed not to understand exactly what was meant in the first of those excepted conditions. As to the second it observed that it could only be fulfilled by violating the constitution and the law of criminal procedure of the realm. The Serbian Government declared itself ready to admit such collaboration as should be conformable to the principles of international law, of criminal procedure, and of good and neighbourly relations; and that it would communicate to Austro-Hungarian agents the results of the judicial inquiry which it purposed itself to institute as to the alleged accomplices of the Sarajevo assassins who might be found within its jurisdiction. In the event of the Imperial Government not being satisfied with this reply, the Serbian Government suggested that the questions at issue should be submitted either to the Hague Tribunal of Arbitration, or to the Great Powers. Later, in a personal telegram to Kaiser Wilhelm, the Tsar of Russia repeated this suggestion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 29th of July. Quotation from this telegram is made in subsequent pages.

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at London assured Sir Edward Grey that the note of his government was not an ultimatum, but simply a "demand," with a fixed limit of time for the response. He added, however, that the Austro-Hungarian plenipotentiary would quit Belgrade that evening, and that thereupon "measures of military preparation"—"not military operations"—against the recalcitrant government would be begun.<sup>1</sup> This puerile juggling with words accorded well with the impudent course already pursued by his government, with the complicity of Germany, in the face of a scandalized world. It was a mere verbal evasion of Russia's prohibition of military operations on Serbian soil, with the Sarajevo murders as their pretext, and as such might afford a future opportunity for diplomatic quibbling, if need should arise.

**Militarist ardour in Austria-Hungary and Germany.** Many of the politicians in Austria-Hungary, and the majority of the militarist clan, had already declared themselves for a war of aggression against Serbia. While some among them, notably Count Tisza, preferred that it should not involve any other Power, others in high station fully accepted the idea that it might very prob-

<sup>1</sup> Baron von Schoen, the German Ambassador at Paris, declared on the 26th of July that Austria's sole object was to assure her own tranquillity and that it depended upon Russia to avoid war.

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ably develop into the long-dreaded European conflagration. The military party feared apparently that Serbia would yield all of Austria's demands, and that thus the hoped-for rupture would be averted. Back of this military party in the Hapsburg Empire was the military party in Germany, including the entire government and—thanks to the long course of public education in the doctrine that "might makes right"—the larger part of the general population. The ultimatum, of which the Kaiser was the responsible *rédacteur*, was "avowedly intended to provoke armed resistance."<sup>1</sup>

**Partition of Serbia planned.** Of course, it would have been ridiculous that this should be the case if the ultimatum was not to serve as an instrument in a tremendous political enterprise, the first step in which was the clearing of the way for the Central Empires to the Hellespont and the Ægean Sea. This step, planned with the utmost secrecy, did not contemplate—at least in the immediate future—the annexing of Serbia to Austria-Hungary, but rather the partition of Serbia among the neighbouring Balkan states, the assignment to Rumania of Bessarabia, and

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of Sir Maurice de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna: "Its [the ultimatum's] integral acceptance was neither expected nor desired, and when, on the following afternoon, it was at first rumoured in Vienna that it had been unconditionally accepted, there was a moment of keen disappointment." Dr. E. J. Dillon confirms this statement: *A Scrap of Paper*, p. 75.

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of Savoy, Nice, and Tunis to Italy. The statesmen of the Central Empires were confident that territorial bribery would prove effectual with Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, and Italy, nor did they believe that Russia would prefer a stupendous war, rather than to relinquish Bessarabia, a considerable part of which, largely inhabited by Rumanians, was acquired by her only in 1878, in exchange for the Dobroudja. Next was to be executed the cleverest of all the phases of the German Emperor's interesting scheme.

**Ulterior project to be concealed.** The essential condition of these territorial changes was that the immediate rivals of Serbia should join themselves together in a new Balkan League, anti-Russian in all its policies and closely dominated and directed by Germany and Austria-Hungary. It was of very great importance to these conspiring Powers that the war which would be preliminary to this political transformation should be restricted to Austria-Hungary and Serbia; and this could only be hoped for if the ulterior project were concealed until the very moment of its realization. Both the subsequent assurance of Austria to the other Powers that she did not intend to annex any portion of Serbia, and that of Germany, when the Great War was determined upon, that she did not purpose to deprive France of any of her continental territory, in no manner forswore the ulterior object, for it was expected that Italy,

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Rumania, Bulgaria, and Greece would easily with their own forces take what the imperial conspirators had assigned to them. The direct reward of the conspirators would come later, more surely and more largely.

This complex plan, 'visionary and presumptuous as it may appear, was not unworthy of the strange ruler of men who sat on the throne of the Hohenzollerns. If alleged of any other monarch, it would excite the highest incredulity. It is probable that the attempt to carry it out could not have been made at all, if the Archduke Franz Ferdinand had lived. He had deeply resolved that Austria-Hungary should cease to be, in effect, the vassal of Germany. He could not have failed to perceive that the German Kaiser sought only to make Austria-Hungary more completely his tool, a cat's-paw to pull the Balkan chestnuts out of the fire for his own behoof and delectation.

**Preparing public opinion for the war.** In Austria-Hungary and Germany, soon after the Sarajevo crimes, one of the most pregnant signs of governmental alertness to coming contingencies was the matter furnished by official agents, especially designed to create a popular feeling in favour of war, to journals of every degree, from the most insignificant to the most powerful. Certain Austrian newspapers, unrebuked by the government, preached the opportuneness of the moment for the crushing of Serbia, and demanded

a "war to the knife" against pan-Serbism. The chief semi-official organ in Vienna exclaimed: "Since war must come, let us provoke war at once." Simultaneously an official journalistic campaign was commenced in Germany to force the public to believe, although only Austria-Hungary was as yet directly concerned as against Serbia, that the German nation was the object of odious aggression, the victim of French, Russian, and British intrigues, inspired by jealousy of its prosperity, of its power, and of its superior "culture." The menacing tone of the German and Austrian press was intended, above all, as a means of intimidating Russia. It was in the midst of this campaign that Prince Lichnowski, on the 21st of July, in conversation with the British Foreign Secretary, pretended that the German Government was seeking to moderate the demands of Vienna. Sir Edward Grey pointed out that Austria-Hungary ought not to punish Serbia for a culpability of which there was as yet no positive proof. Under such circumstance, intervention to induce Serbia to humble herself would be unjustifiable.

**False representations of Austria.** The emphatic earnestness of the admonitions of the Powers had ostensibly the effect, just on the eve of the despatch of the ultimatum, of putting the Austrian Government in a hesitant mood. The Paris Government, at least, received the momentary impression that its attitude was more concilia-



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tory. Bienvenu-Martin, Foreign Minister *ad interim*, in a despatch to the French ambassadors at London, Berlin, Saint Petersburg, and Rome, said, on the 23d of July: "Baron Macchio [Under-Secretary of Foreign Affairs at Vienna] affirmed to our ambassador that the tone and terms of the Austrian note are of such a character, that a peaceful outcome may be fully expected." But he added: "In view of the habits of the Imperial Chancellerie, I do not know what faith should be put in such assurances." In other words, he suspected the Austrian minister of lying. The event, indeed, showed that either the Austrian minister had lied or that renewed counsels from Berlin had, on the same day, stiffened the desire of the Vienna Government to exert upon Serbia the utmost tyrannical pressure possible. The first impression is apparently confirmed by the documentary record of the negotiations, taken as a whole.

Serbia had promptly heeded the moderate advice of the Powers of the Triple Entente. Russia had plainly shown that, as Serbia had given proof of a proper degree of moderation, she would aid her to defend herself, if attacked. The three Powers bent their combined efforts upon Germany and Austria-Hungary. But Germany had revealed already the part which she purposed to play. Her communication to the Powers of the Triple Entente, to the effect that this was an

affair "to be exclusively settled by Austria-Hungary and Serbia," and her intimation of the "incalculable consequences" of persistent interference by Britain and France, amounted practically to a notice to them to keep their hands off.

**Germany's course uncompromising throughout.** Germany, whatever her subsequent pretences may have been, never for an instant budged from this position. Her ministers, indeed, affected a disposition, from time to time, to further the negotiations for peace. But in London, immediately after the publication of the ultimatum, Prince Lichnowski intimated privately to the Russian Ambassador, his relative, that Germany would take no step whatever to influence the Austrian Government to abate its demands. In more diplomatic form, the German Ambassador repeated this statement to Sir Edward Grey. The imminence of mobilization by the four great continental Powers, members of the opposing groups, was already discussed. The main issue was now between Austria and Russia. That between Austria and Serbia was but secondary. The certainty that, if war should come, Germany and France would take part in it, was in the thoughts of all. Sir Edward Grey, in conversation with Prince Lichnowski, anticipated a suggestion, which later came from Berlin, by saying that since Germany would not intervene at Vienna, the British Government was debarred from any similar

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step at Saint Petersburg. If, however, both Austria and Russia mobilized their forces, the occasion would be offered for intervention by the other Powers. If war broke out, he said solemnly, no great European Power could stand aloof. This warning was timely; but it had no deterrent effect either in Berlin or in Vienna.

**Striving for a respite for Serbia.** The pressing question now was whether Austria-Hungary would grant to Serbia the further interval which was absolutely essential if there was to be effectual mediation. Sir Edward Grey for a moment was hopeful that time would be given the Powers to intervene at Vienna and Belgrade. From Saint Petersburg came assurances that Russia would strive to get this concession from Austria-Hungary, and that, even if hostilities were commenced against Serbia, she would continue her pacific endeavours. She asked that Britain, Italy, Germany, and Rumania should act in a like sense, France having already undertaken to do so. Von Jagow said that he had instructed the German Ambassador at Vienna also to request an extension of time; but he added that he believed these efforts were all too late. He repeated to all the diplomatists accredited to Berlin that the affair between Serbia and Austria-Hungary should be regarded as "purely local." His conduct was dilatory and was so pronounced by the French Foreign Minister.

**Secret understanding of Austria-Hungary and Germany.** It may be inferred that the unavowed understanding between Austria and Germany had rendered useless all restraining efforts even from the beginning of the affair. The German Foreign Secretary affected to doubt, nevertheless, that hostilities between Austria-Hungary and Serbia would extend to the rest of Europe. In the light of all that is now known of Germany's real motives and of her occult manœuvres, this fact illustrates again the thorough disingenuousness of her behaviour towards the Powers of the Triple Entente. Baron Macchio, indeed, received with icy mien at Vienna the observation of the Russian Ambassador that to deny the Powers the opportunity to make a careful examination of the grievances alleged against Serbia was contrary to the rules of international courtesy. His characteristic reply was that self-interest sometimes dispensed with courtesy. The French Ambassador thereupon telegraphed to Paris that Austria-Hungary was resolved to humble Serbia, and that no intervention would be accepted before the blow had been struck. Austria-Hungary refused, indeed, to grant the delay for which Russia, with the approval of the other three Powers, had asked.

**Serbia's answer rejected.** A half-hour after he had received the Serbian answer to the ultimatum, and even before he could have had time to examine it in detail, the Austrian Minister,

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Count Giesl, declared it to be unsatisfactory to his government and left Belgrade.

The diplomatic rupture had come before either France or Britain could join directly in Russia's request for more time. Serbia knew that she must expect a sudden attack on the part of Austria-Hungary, and she at once began to mobilize her army, while the government retired to Nish.

Austria-Hungary had her rejoinder to Serbia's reply fully prepared on the 27th. It pointed out evasions and subterfuges in the Serbian note, and made much stronger points against certain other parts of it than against the modification or rejection of the two critical demands. The reasoning of the Vienna Foreign Office, however, gave no really fundamental justification of the ultimatum as a whole. The Serbian Government in short was accused of falsehood and of pretending to misunderstand the Austrian note, where misunderstanding was impossible.

**The four Powers try to delay hostilities.** A new phase of the negotiations was here ushered in. The four less interested Powers faced a wholly changed situation. The British Foreign Minister declared that their most urgent duty was to ask Austria-Hungary and Russia not to cross each other's frontiers until a sufficient time had elapsed for mediation. It was necessary that Germany should be a party to this request. In view of her relation to Austria as a defensive ally, Italy still

preferred to stand watchfully aloof. She had not been consulted as to the terms of the ultimatum. Her Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that, if she had been, she would have disapproved of it. Sazonof, the Russian minister, continued to seek a means of preventing war. "Up to the last moment," he said, "I shall be ready to negotiate." And he kept his word. Accepting a deceptive suggestion which originated in the German Foreign Office, he proposed a direct telegraphic correspondence with Count Berchtold, and meanwhile he summoned Count Szapary, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, to a frank and loyal explanation.

At this interview, he commented, article by article, upon the Austrian ultimatum, and pointed out the insolent character of its chief clauses. "The tone," he said, "is indefensible. Take back the document; modify its form, and I will answer for the result."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of Sazonof to the Russian Ambassador at Vienna 26th of July: "It would seem to me very desirable that the Ambassador of Austria-Hungary should be authorized to engage in an exchange of private views with myself looking to the recasting between us of some of the articles of the Austrian note. This procedure would permit perhaps the finding of a formula which would be acceptable to Serbia and satisfactory at the same time to Austria as to the substance of her demands. Please have a prudent and friendly explanation in this sense with the foreign minister."

*Journal des Débats*, Paris, 26th of September: "Austria would have had a brilliant triumph, augmenting her prestige in the Orient, while humiliating Serbia, if she had accepted the latter's

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**Germany's sly suggestion to France.** Germany now revealed yet another device of her diplomatic cunning. Her Ambassador at Paris, Baron von Schoen, requested the French Government to use its persuasive offices at Saint Petersburg in favour of peace. "Austria," he said, "has declared to Russia that she seeks neither territorial aggrandizement nor to impair the sovereignty of Serbia<sup>1</sup>; but only to insure her own tranquillity and to maintain order. It depends upon the decisions which Russia shall make whether war may be avoided. Germany is at one with France in the ardent desire that peace shall be maintained." The French Foreign Minister *ad interim* replied to this that Russia's attitude was moderate; that she and France were in accord in seeking a peaceful solution, and that it seemed to them that Germany rather ought to act at Vienna, where she could be sure of preventing, if she would, a hostile occupation of Serbia. Von Schoen ob-

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tender of satisfaction. It is evident, as she broke off friendly relations after that, that she desired war, with the complicity and at the instigation of Germany."

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, Austria had not as yet made any such declaration regarding the Serbian sovereignty. Isvolsky, Russian Ambassador at Paris, to Sazonof, Foreign Minister: "I have it from the President that the Ambassador of Austria in these latter days has energetically assured the president of the council and himself that Austria had declared to us that she was ready to respect not only the territorial integrity of Serbia, but also her sovereign rights; but that we intentionally remained silent as to this declaration. I have opposed to this a categorical denial."

jected that Germany could not do this consistently with her contention that the issue concerned only Austria and Serbia.

**Triple motive of Germany.** The object of Germany in this overture had been, first, to place France in the false position of seeking to influence her ally, Russia, against the latter's own interests, and thus to create, if possible, an estrangement between them; secondly, to intimidate France and thus impel her to make intervention at Saint Petersburg; and, thirdly, to mask, by pacific assurances, the ulterior military purpose of Austria-Hungary in Serbia, and at the same time make it possible to attribute the responsibility for the Great War, should it come, to France and Russia.<sup>1</sup> Von Schoen tried upon a plausible pretext to induce the Foreign Office at Paris to issue a note to the press relative to this interview, tending to impart a false sense of security to the French public, but he failed.

**Germany's responsibility fixed.** The net result of the interview was to fix indelibly upon Germany the responsibility for the outcome of the crisis.

If Germany does not intervene at Vienna [wrote Bienvenu-Martin to Viviani, the Premier-Ministre] she justifies every suspicion and assumes the responsibility of the war. By their urgent advice, the

<sup>1</sup> Despatches of the Russian chargé d'affaires at Paris, 26th of July.



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Powers, particularly France, England, and Russia, have determined Belgrade to yield; they have done their part, then; it is now for Germany, who alone is in a position to be promptly heard at Vienna, to give advice to Austria, who has received satisfaction and must not unloose a general war because of a detail which can be easily arranged.

**Sir Edward Grey's efforts for peace.** The European crisis now completely overshadowed the original issue between Austria and Serbia. How was the resolve of Austria, abetted by Germany, to be shaken? How were both of those nations to be won back to a humane reasonableness? Sir Edward Grey, as at the beginning, took the lead in efforts for appeasement. The day after the delivery of the Austrian ultimatum he had already suggested at Saint Petersburg, through Sir G. Buchanan, that Britain, France, Germany, and Italy should engage in active mediation, both at that capital and at Vienna. France immediately ordered her ambassadors to co-operate with those of Britain in this undertaking, as affording the sole remaining chance of success. The Italian Government also promptly accepted the proposal, although San Giuliano expressed the opinion that Austria would still refuse to yield, even at the risk of a European conflagration.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> San Giuliano thought that Serbia would have done well to conform to the Austrian demands in their entirety. Despatch of Barrère, French Ambassador at Rome, 27th of July.

**Empty objections of von Jagow.** Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador at Berlin, had a somewhat dramatic interview with Foreign Secretary von Jagow. The latter told him, as he had Sir W. E. Goschen, that he could not accede to the proposal because it meant in effect the establishment of a court of arbitration, which could not be convoked except at the request of Austria-Hungary and Russia; and which the former would not accept. In spite of perfectly clear reasons which were presented to him to prove that the suggested conference of the four Powers would have nothing in common with a court of arbitration, the German statesman adhered doggedly to this purely technical argument. Cambon pointed out that this was the occasion for demonstrating the existence of a common European spirit, in travail for peace. The only response that Herr von Jagow could give was that Germany had her engagements with Austria, and must fulfil them.

**Solemn admonition of the French Ambassador.** "I remarked," wrote Jules Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, "that the relations of Germany with Vienna were no closer than those of France with Saint Petersburg, and that it was he, in this instance, who was putting the two groups of allies in opposition to each other." The Ambassador further declared that Serbia had given Austria-Hungary substantially the satisfaction which she

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demanding, and that Germany could now either counsel the latter to be content with so much, or to treat with Serbia as to the ultimate terms of her response. The German minister's answer was not very clear, and Cambon turned upon him suddenly. "Does Germany want war?" he inquired. Thereupon von Jagow protested with great warmth that he knew this was in the other's thought, but that it was not true. "Then," said the Ambassador, "you ought to act accordingly. Weigh in your conscience the terms of the Serbian response, and in the name of humanity, I entreat you, do not assume personally any of the responsibility for the catastrophe which is now preparing—and that without hindrance from you!"

**Suggestion of intervention at Saint Petersburg renewed.** At London in interviews with the Ambassadors of Austria-Hungary and Germany, Sir Edward Grey sustained with strong arguments the plan of a joint intervention by the four Powers, but the former met them with the specious suggestion already made by von Schoen at Paris, that the proper place for the exercise of a conciliating influence was Saint Petersburg. The answer to this was that Russia had given proof of great moderation since the commencement of the crisis, notably in her advice to Serbia, and that to approach her now with gratuitous pacific recommendations would be rather embarrassing. Sir Edward Grey

insisted that Germany's help at Vienna was indispensable to the cause of peace.

In the meanwhile, still evincing her sincere desire for peace, Russia continued her effort for a direct exchange of views with Austria. The British Secretary, hopeful, although dubious, of the success of this step, allowed the plan of the *quadrupartite* conference to fall for the moment into abeyance. The Russian overture at first was apparently well received at Vienna. It was suspected in Paris however that this impression was slyly created, simply in order to gain time. Jules Cambon at Berlin telegraphed the same comment to Bienvenu-Martin. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador at London,<sup>1</sup> expressed his anxiety lest Sazonof's suggestion should be used as merely a means of evading the conference of the four Powers and that thus both projects should fall to the ground. Sazonof derived nothing but discouragement from an interview with the Austrian and German Ambassadors at Saint Petersburg. "Decidedly," he declared immediately afterwards, "Austria does not want to talk." The impression was soon confirmed by the formal refusal by the Vienna Government of Sazonof's proposal.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brother of the French Ambassador at Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Paléologue, the French Ambassador at Saint Petersburg, telegraphed the news of this refusal to Bienvenu-Martin, on the 28th of July.

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**Austria declares war on Serbia.** Such was the pass to which diplomacy had come when, at noon on the very day on which this refusal became known to the four Powers, Austria-Hungary declared war upon Serbia. The action was accompanied by the issue, through her embassies, of a manifesto in the nature of an indictment of the weaker nation. Its chief burden was the powerful racial sentiment in Serbia, wrought up by propagandist societies, favoured and nurtured by the government, into a passionate hatred of Austria-Hungary, and directed to the despoiling of the latter of her Slavic provinces. By elaborate argument and a great array of alleged facts the writer of this paper led up to a denunciation of the Serbian Government as having actually abetted the slaying of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenburg, his wife.<sup>1</sup> An authorized communication to the press, giving the reasons of the Imperial Government for rejecting the reply of Serbia, announced the partial mobilization of the Austro-Hungarian forces. In a despatch to his government the French Ambassador at Vienna voiced the suspicion prevalent there, that Germany had impelled Austria to her sudden and violent action, so that they might

<sup>1</sup> Statement of the Russian foreign minister, 2d of August: "The manifesto which accompanied the declaration openly accuses Serbia of having prepared and executed the Sarajevo crimes." This interpretation of the manifesto is plainly exaggerative.

together enter upon a war with Russia and France, but more especially the former, under conditions most favourable to themselves, and upon which they had founded deliberate calculations.

The Great War may be said to have begun in what was relatively a skirmish. On the night of the 28th of July, 1914, the Austro-Hungarians bombarded the citadel of the open city of Belgrade, the capital of Serbia.

## CHAPTER IV

### PATIENT AND PERSISTENT EFFORTS OF FRANCE, RUSSIA, BRITAIN, AND ITALY TO LIMIT THE CONFLICT

**Tergiversations of Austro-German Diplomacy in the Third Phase of the Diplomatic Debate—Austria Amuses the Members of the Triple Entente in Order to Gain Time—Her Sophistries Exposed—Russia Anxious for Mediation—The German Foreign Minister "Blows Hot and Cold"—Contradictory Representations—Proof of Disloyalty in the Negotiations—Berlin Disappointed at Britain's Attitude—Firmness and Moderation of the Russian Government—Offer to Suspend Military Preparations if Reasonable Concessions are Made in Favour of Serbian Sovereignty—Austria-Hungary Responds with Fresh Provocation to Russia's Conciliatory Advances—The Passive Hypocrisy of the Kaiser's Government Annuls All Pacific Moves—Telegraphic Conference of Three Sovereigns—Wilhelm II. Aims to Fix the Responsibility of War upon the Tsar—Britain Asked to Barter her Neutrality at the Expense of France—The Violation of Belgium—The First Climax Reached.**

**N**OW commenced the third phase of this remarkable diplomatic struggle in the cause of peace, the greatest, without doubt, that the world has seen.

**Austria asked to suspend her military action. There was still a ray of hope, although feeble and**

elusive, for Britain, France, and Russia. It was thought that Austria could perhaps be induced to arrest her military movement, since she had already demonstrated her ability to inflict punitive damage upon Serbia, and might submit herself to the guidance of friendly negotiators. Austria's diplomatic course, however, was quite as dilatory, as shiftily and untrustworthy, as it had always been. There may have been moments of vacillation on her part, due to a fear of consequences, which now loomed much greater and were filled with larger possibilities of disaster than she had at first imagined; as when at the eleventh hour—and too late—she allowed her Ambassador to say at Paris that she "not only had no intention of violating the integrity of Serbian territory, but was ready to discuss with the other Powers the fundamental motives of her conflict with Serbia."<sup>1</sup> But it is much more probable that she was simply continuing her ruse of amusing the Triple Entente while Germany was completing her preparations for attacking France and Russia.<sup>2</sup> There is an alternative supposition: that she really wavered in her purpose, but that Germany's secret assurances or remonstrances again gave her a new

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of Isvolsky to Sazonof, 1st of August, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> "The French Government is much preoccupied with the extraordinary military preparations of Germany on the French frontier, for it is convinced that under the cloak of the *Kriegsgefahrzustand* a veritable mobilization is being carried out."—Isvolsky to Sazonof the same date.



firmness, which finally carried her over the threshold which divided peace from war. To Sir W. E. Goschen at Berlin, on the 29th, von Jagow had deprecated the imparting of any idea of moral pressure at Vienna as likely to bring about ir-retractable action. The psychological insight of the German Foreign Minister into the Austro-Hungarian consciousness was, it must be owned, most extraordinary.

**Austro-Germanic sophistries exposed.** Bienvenu-Martin issued to the French diplomatic representatives an admirable *résumé* of the situation, in which he exposed the sophistries and the insincerity of the Austrian and German Governments.

Germany [he wrote] has interposed between her ally and the other Powers, declaring that the question is a local one, relating to a crime which is to be punished and to guaranties for the cessation of the anti-Austrian plots. The German Government holds that Russia ought to content herself with the official and formal assurances of Austria that she does not seek territorial aggrandizement and will respect the integrity of Serbia. According to this view, it is from Russia alone, if she would intervene in so narrowly limited a question, that the danger can proceed. According to this view, it is at Saint Petersburg alone that steps should be taken for the maintenance of peace. This sophism, which would

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exempt Germany from the duty of intervening at Vienna, was unsuccessfully sustained at Paris by M. von Schoen, who vainly endeavoured to draw us into a demonstration at Saint Petersburg significant of a common interest on the part of France and Germany. It was also presented to Sir Edward Grey in London.

In France, as in England, the answer was that the Saint Petersburg Cabinet had from the commencement given the greatest proofs of its moderation, particularly in associating itself with the other Powers to advise Serbia that she yield to the requirements of the Austrian note. Russia, then, is not menacing peace in any manner whatsoever. It is at Vienna that action must be taken; it is thence that the danger proceeds, from the moment that Serbia's almost total submission to exorbitant requirements fails to give satisfaction and that the collaboration of the Powers in the discussion of the points which remain to be regulated as between Austria and Serbia is not accepted, and, finally, when there is no hesitancy in making a declaration of war as precipitate as was the first Austro-Hungarian note. The attitude at Berlin, as at Vienna, is still dilatory. In the former capital, even while protest is made of a desire to safeguard the general peace, by a common action on the part of the four Powers, the idea of a conference is rejected, while no other is suggested, and action of any sort at Vienna is positively declined. At the Austrian capital the endeavour is to amuse Saint Petersburg with the illusion of a possible understanding, resulting from direct "conversations" whilst action against Serbia is pending.

**To enforce the project of a conference.** Bienvenu-Martin declared that there must be no delay at Saint Petersburg in adopting the English proposition for a conference of the four Powers and at Berlin this must be so strongly supported as to determine von Jagow to genuine interference at Vienna, sufficient to put a check upon Austria and to prevent her from adding a military triumph to her diplomatic one.

The Austro-Hungarian Government would not fail [wrote the French minister] to profit thereby by imposing upon Serbia conditions which, under the elastic name of guaranties, would modify, in fact, and in spite of assurances of disinterestedness as to territory, the status of oriental Europe, and thus risk a grave menace, either now or in the near future, to the general peace.

All the four Powers were of one mind as to the duty of still labouring to avert a general war, although all recognized that the Austrian declaration had put an end to the hope of direct negotiation between Saint Petersburg and Vienna. The Italian Cabinet urged the quadripartite intervention as a supreme necessity. The Russian Government fully acquiesced, and even asked Britain to hasten mediation as much as possible and to obtain the immediate stoppage of Austria's military operations against Serbia, the continuance of which would enable the former to crush the latter

while the *pourparlers* were still "dragging their slow length along."

Von Jagow "blows hot and cold." Germany's Secretary of State was undoubtedly "blowing hot and cold" in the same breath. It was he who had caused the first hint to be given at Saint Petersburg that direct "conversations" with Vienna might be effectual of a peaceful result. He told the French Ambassador in plausible vein that he believed this to be the best procedure by which to break the existing tension. He had urged the Vienna Government, he said, to enter upon this course. There is not the slightest evidence that, if he did this or took any other ostensible measure for softening the attitude of Austria-Hungary, it was in such terms as could have conveyed the least impression of earnestness or sincerity. All the circumstances and all the documents relating to the negotiations, to which access has been possible, tend to exactly the contrary conviction. On the 27th of July, Prince Lichnowski in London, whether duly instructed or not, had informed Sir Edward Grey that the German Government accepted "in principle" the proposed mediation of the four Powers, reserving to itself the right to aid Austria as its ally, if she were attacked. But on that day in Berlin von Jagow told Sir E. Goschen that he could not support this suggestion, and the German Ambassador at Paris "strongly insisted upon the exclusion of any possibility of a

mediation or conference"! And on the 28th, while the Austrian foreign minister was telling Sir M. de Bunsen at Vienna "quietly, but firmly, that no discussion could be accepted on the basis of the Serbian note"; that war would be declared on that day, "and that the well-known pacific character of the Emperor, as well, he might add, as his own, might be accepted as a guaranty that the war [as between Austria and Serbia] was both just and inevitable," the German Kaiser was telegraphing to the Tsar Nicholas that he would use all of his influence "to determine Austria-Hungary to arrive at a loyal and satisfactory understanding with Russia."

**Confirmation of disloyalty.** This same inconsistency, this same shiftiness of attitude, pervades the rest of the communications, verbal or written, of the German Government on the question of war or peace. The suspicion of secret disloyalty on its part was strengthened on the 29th, the day after Austria's refusal of direct negotiation, by von Jagow's assertion that he was still awaiting news on this subject from Vienna, and was continuing his efforts to influence Austria-Hungary in a favourable sense. Furthermore, he professed, after the declaration of war against Serbia, to regard the latter's reply, which had been contemptuously rejected, as a still "possible basis of negotiation." This ostensible sharing in the hopes of the British foreign secretary was inspired, in the

opinion of Jules Cambon, by an entirely new conviction, derived from the recent dispatches of Prince Lichnowski, that Britain would not stand aside from the greater conflict which, it now seemed almost certain, was to develop out of the Austro-Serbian difficulty. This was a tragical disappointment. It produced a distinct shock in imperial circles at Berlin, where British neutrality had been confidently counted upon. It may also account in some degree for Austria's pretence, three days later, that she had been willing, and had thus declared at Saint Petersburg, that her dispute with Serbia should be treated as a European question, and so discussed by the Powers. But at this same moment Sazonof, after an interview with the Kaiser's Ambassador, had drawn the conclusion that Germany fully approved of the uncompromising temper which Austria had hitherto shown and had not in the least degree sought to influence her in the contrary sense. The Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, commenting upon the attitude of the Tsar's government, said that unfortunately neither Austria nor Germany had believed that Russia would go to war upon the Serbian issue. But this illusion was now dissipated, and thus Vienna and Berlin suffered two most severe disappointments simultaneously.

**Clever evasion of von Jagow.** Another indication of duplicity on the part of Germany was her acceptance "in principle" of the friendly inter-

vention of the four Powers, as between Austria and Russia, while she condemned every suggestion of a specific form to be given to it. When pressure for this intervention was renewed by the British Foreign Office, von Jagow was put into a position of extreme embarrassment by being asked to formulate the conditions under which it might be effected. He found, however, a means of evasion, giving at the same time a new turn to the proposition. He instructed the German Ambassador at Vienna, according to his statement,<sup>1</sup> to ask the Austrian Government upon what basis it would be willing to treat. The effect of such a move was practically to eliminate Britain, France, and Italy from the direct process of intervention, and to entrust it to von Tschirschky, whose pan-Germanic and anti-Russian sentiments were but too well known.<sup>2</sup> No answer to this question was ever communicated to the Russian, French, and British Governments.

<sup>1</sup> The German and Austro-Hungarian Governments having failed to make a frank exposition of the diplomatic correspondence which passed between them at this crisis, every verbal statement emanating from either one of them must be received with caution.

<sup>2</sup> "M. von Tschirschky is one of those convinced, acidulous Russophobes who are obsessed by racial hatred of an intensity which men of the English-speaking races are unable to realize. . . . The keynote of his policy has been *delenda est Moscovia*. . . . He assured the Austrian Government that, from information in possession to the Wilhelmstrasse [German Foreign Office], Russia was powerless to strike a blow."—Dr. E. J. DILLON, *A Scrap of Paper*.

**Firmness and moderation of Sazonof.** Sazonof and the Russian Tsar were already convinced that "Germany did not wish to pronounce at Vienna the decisive word which would prevent war." Reports of Austrian and German military preparations multiplied. It was then that Sazonof declared to the French Ambassador (on the 30th of July): "I will negotiate until the last moment."<sup>1</sup> On the same day he said most emphatically to the German Ambassador, who protested against Russian military preparations and affirmed that Austria had no designs upon Serbia's territory.<sup>2</sup> "It is not alone the territorial integrity of Serbia that we must safeguard, but her independence and her sovereignty. We cannot consent that Serbia shall become the vassal of Austria." And he added:

It is too grave a moment for me to refrain from imparting to you my entire thought. In making representations at Saint Petersburg, while she refuses to do so at Vienna, Germany is seeking merely to gain time, so that Austria may crush the little Serbian

<sup>1</sup> Sazonof informed the French and British Ambassadors, 30th of July, that the Russian Government possessed absolute proof that Germany was making preparations against Russia by land and sea, but more especially in the direction of the Gulf of Finland.

<sup>2</sup> At this interview the German Ambassador showed great emotion, evidently because convinced that Russia would go to war for Serbia, unless Austria-Hungary made important concessions; and he asked the Russian minister to make some suggestion which, as a last hope, he could telegraph to the Berlin Government.



kingdom ere Russia can go to her aid. But so great is the desire of the Tsar Nicholas to avert this war that I will make you a new proposition in his name.

**New Proposition by Russia.** The text which Sazonof then dictated was as follows:

If Austria, recognizing that her conflict with Serbia has assumed the character of a question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum the clauses which are prejudicial to the sovereignty of Serbia, Russia binds herself to discontinue her military preparations.

Great Britain believed it to be necessary that Austria-Hungary's advance upon Serbia should be immediately stopped, if there were to be any hope of a peaceful accommodation between the Hapsburg and Romanof monarchies. Sir Edward Grey asked the French Government, therefore, to support a proposal that he was about to make at Saint Petersburg. The German Government, in conformity to a suggestion made by him on the 29th, had announced that it would endeavour to get from Austria-Hungary the promise not to make any further advance, after capturing Belgrade and occupying the regions near the frontier, so long as the Powers were seeking adequate amends from Serbia for her neighbour, the seized territory to be evacuated when this end should have been attained. France supported this pro-

posal, and Sazonof accordingly modified his offer to Austria-Hungary, so that it assumed the following form:

If Austria consents to stay the advance of her armies in Serbian territory, and if, recognizing that the Austro-Serbian conflict has assumed the character of a question of European interest, she admits that the Great Powers shall inquire into the satisfaction which Serbia can accord to the government of Austria-Hungary, without permitting any prejudice to her rights as a sovereign state or to her independence, Russia binds herself to maintain her expectant attitude.

The issue was thus made more and more clear. For all the governments concerned there was no escaping a precise knowledge of it.

**Germany's Foreign Minister decides for Austria.**

It is strikingly characteristic of the diplomatic game which the central empires had played from the commencement of the great crisis that the next and final word in reference to the direct negotiation between Russia and Austria should come from Berlin, and that it had the form of a decision, or at least of a conclusion, arrived at by the German Government's own initiative. It was von Jagow, the Kaiser's Foreign Secretary, who dashed the last tangible hope of an understanding that might have averted the impending calamity. Here is the dispatch of Jules Cambon on the subject (the 30th of July):

No official communication of Germany's response to the request of Sir Edward Grey has been received by the English Ambassador. He has informed me that Berlin had consulted Vienna and was still awaiting advices from its ally. My Russian colleague has just told me that M. von Jagow (to whom Count Pourtales had communicated the formula of conciliation suggested by M. Sazonof for an Austro-Russian understanding) had just declared to him that this proposition was in its nature unacceptable to Austria, thus marking the negative authority of German diplomacy at Vienna.

**Germany seeks to humiliate Russia.** Viviani, who had now returned to his post of Foreign Minister at Paris, sent, on the following day, a dispatch to the Ambassadors of the Republic at London, Saint Petersburg, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, and Constantinople, wherein after mentioning the concerted or parallel efforts of Britain, France, and Russia to bring about a direct understanding between Saint Petersburg and Vienna, or a mediation, in the most appropriate form, by the four less interested Powers, and the hope that this latter proposal might yet succeed, he added:

Nevertheless, the constant attitude of Germany, who since the commencement of the conflict, while ceaselessly protesting her peaceful intentions to each of the Powers, has in fact, by her dilatory or negative course, caused the failure of every attempt to bring about an accord, and through her ambassador has

ceaselessly encouraged the uncompromising temper of the Vienna Government; the German military preparations, begun the 25th of July and pursued since then without pause; the immediate opposition of Germany to the Russian formula, declared at Berlin to be unacceptable to Austria before that Power had been even consulted; and every impression, in short, that has emanated from Berlin, enforces the conviction that Germany has sought the humiliation of Russia, the upbreking of the Triple Entente, and if these results could not be obtained—war.

**Austrian provocation responds to Russian conciliation.** The bombardment of Belgrade had produced immense emotion at Saint Petersburg. The arbitrary course of Austria was regarded by the Russian public as inexplicable. It was remarked that every conciliatory effort by Russia had invariably been followed by fresh provocations on the part of Austria.

War was, indeed, very near. All these discussions and exchanges of suggestions and propositions may almost be said to have been carried on to the ever-rising accompaniment of the rattling of arms.

On July 30th the German Ambassador at Saint Petersburg informed Mr. Sazonof that unless Russia desisted from her armed preparations, which had been begun with her troops in the district of Kief, Odessa, Moscow, and Kazan, immediately after the declaration of war upon Serbia, his own

government would take similar steps. The Tsar's minister explained to the Ambassador that the Russian preparations had been commenced only after Austria had put eight of her army corps on a war footing and had refused to settle her difference with Serbia by peaceful means. Mr. Sazonof declared on the same day to Paléologue that under these circumstances Russia could now only hasten her armaments and face the probability of war, while counting on the aid of France, and hoping that Britain would speedily join them. Viviani announced to the Russian and British Governments that France was resolved to fulfil her obligations to her Allies; but that at the same time she would neglect nothing that could bring about a peaceful ending of the crisis. Russia, in view of the hope of such a solution which still subsisted, was advised to take no immediate step which would afford Germany a pretext for putting all or a part of her forces on a war footing.

**Austria and Germany on a war footing.** Austria pursued her attack upon Serbia, and on the 31st of July decreed the placing of all her army upon a war footing. Von Jagow had declared on the 27th that Germany would not "mobilize" if Russia refrained from doing so on the Austrian frontier. Under the clumsy subterfuge of the *Kriegsgefahrstund* ("state of war danger"), however, Germany did begin on the same day the general "mobilizing" of her troops. She had

already taken the initial steps of war preparation and of partial mobilization as early as the 26th. Von Jagow on the 30th denied the premature announcement of mobilization, which the government had confessedly drawn up well in advance, but quasi-secret mobilization continued nevertheless at increased speed.<sup>1</sup> All of this nature that could be done before the issuing of the formal mobilization decree had been accomplished, in the opinion of Jules Cambon, prior to the 31st.<sup>2</sup> At an extraordinary council held at Potsdam on the night of the 29th, the Kaiser presiding, the decision to "mobilize" had been taken, but, owing to various considerations, among which was Britain's reservation of her liberty of action, and an exchange of telegrams between the Kaiser and the Tsar, the

<sup>1</sup> Von Jagow confessed, by implication, on the 1st of August, in conversation with Sir E. Goschen, that Germany's motive was to forestall Russia's mobilization. The Ambassador's report of the minister's remarks on this subject is as follows: "Russia had said that her mobilization did not necessarily imply war, and that she could perfectly well remain 'mobilized' for months without making war. This was not the case with Germany. She had the speed and Russia had the numbers, and the safety of the German Empire forbade that Germany should allow Russia time to bring up masses of troops from all parts of her wide dominions."

<sup>2</sup> "I have the strongest reasons for thinking that all the measures of mobilization that could be carried on before the publication of the order of mobilization have been taken here, where the desire is that we should be the first to announce our mobilization, so that the responsibility may be imputed to us."—JULES CAMBON.

Imperial order was not at once issued. The French Ambassador at London informed the British Government of these facts.

**France refuses to be the aggressor.** Austria, Germany, Russia, and France were all engaged in making dispositions of their troops, now needful in view of the imminence of general hostilities. Those of Germany assigned to guard (or to "cover") the frontier were placed at a distance from it of only a few hundred yards. The French "covering" force,<sup>1</sup> on the contrary, was kept within a line more than six miles in the rear of it, on the hither side.

Our plan of offensive campaign [wrote Viviani to the British Government on the 30th] contemplates battle-positions, nevertheless, as near to the frontier as possible. In thus leaving a strip of territory entirely open to a sudden advance of the enemy, the Government of the French Republic intends to demonstrate that the responsibility of the first attack does not rest upon France, any more than it does upon Russia. For assurance of this, it suffices to compare the measures taken on the opposite sides of the frontier: In France the soldiers on furlough were not recalled until we were sure that the German Government had already taken such action some five days before. In Germany, not only have the troops of the Metz garrison been pushed forward to the frontier, but they have also been reinforced with detachments brought by railway from interior garrisons

<sup>1</sup> Troops of the standing army regularly stationed at the frontier.

such as Trèves and Cologne. In France nothing of this sort has been done. The putting of the frontier places in readiness for war was begun in Germany on the 25th. In France we are just on the point of doing this, longer delay being out of the question. In Germany, military possession of the railway stations began on the 25th; in France on the 28th. Finally in Germany, the army reservists, together with their officers, have been summoned individually by tens of thousands, and those residing abroad (conscripted of 1903 to 1911) have been recalled; the roads in the interior are closed; permits for the passage of automobiles are required. It is the last stage preceding the formal mobilization. No measures of this kind have been taken in France. The German army has its advance posts at our outer bounds. The frontier from Metz to the Luxemburg border is occupied by the Sixteenth Corps from Metz, reinforced by a part of the Eighth from Trèves and Cologne; the Fifteenth Corps from Strasburg is massed on the frontier.

**Militarists dictate diplomacy at Berlin.** Von Jagow, nevertheless, had returned to the charge of the 30th by protesting to the French Ambassador that the Russian military preparations on the Austrian border jeopardized pacific intervention at Vienna, upon which "everything depended." He added that he feared that Austria would put her entire forces upon a war footing, after Russia's partial mobilization, and that this in turn might lead to complete mobilization by Russia and,



again, by Germany. This was another instance of "blowing hot and cold," for the German Secretary had previously told Jules Cambon that Germany would be obliged to mobilize only if Russia did so on the German frontier. To a reminder of this fact, he replied that the army chiefs were insistent, as delay meant a lessening of advantage for the German army.

**Frank warnings from Sir Edward Grey.** Germany and Austria had shown an anxious desire to be assured of Great Britain's future position in relation to an important continental war. Sir Edward Grey's attitude, as to this question, was loyal and frank. He did not leave the slightest ground for misapprehension by any of the other Powers. If the armed conflict could be confined to Austria and Serbia, without risking the hostile intervention of Russia, Britain would remain aloof. She could have no motive for engaging in a strictly local war, wherein her interests would not be directly affected. He borrowed Germany's phrase, however, to emphasize the possibility of "incalculable consequences," if the conflict could not be so confined. And he told Count Mensdorff, the Austrian Ambassador, on the day before the declaration of war against Serbia, that the British fleet, which had been engaged in manœuvres, would not be dispersed for the present, in view of the possible emergency. He approved what Sir G. Buchanan had said to Sazonof at Saint Petersburg, that

other considerations than the Austro-Serbian issue might involve Great Britain in the struggle. He made it clear to the French Ambassador at London that the British Government viewed the present difficulty from a standpoint wholly different from that which it had held in reference to the Morocco question, about which there had been a special agreement with the Government of France. Germany, in that instance, had sought to pick a quarrel with her ancient rival, with the purpose of crushing her. If Germany and France were both implicated in the present war, it would remain with Great Britain to decide what she would do.

Ten days later Prince Lichnowski asked Sir Edward Grey whether Britain would remain neutral in the threatened conflict. The minister answered that if the war became general, the British Government could not be neutral, particularly if France were involved in it.

**Germany offers Britain a virtual bribe.** Now arose a further train of incidents, curiously illustrative of German diplomacy. It was just after Austria's refusal to hold direct communication with Russia on the Serbian question. Von Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, had returned from consultation with the Kaiser at Potsdam. He sent for the British Ambassador and told him that he feared, if Russia attacked Austria, a European conflagration would be inevitable. He earnestly argued for British neutral-

ity. If it were promised, he said, his government, would give every possible assurance that it would not seek to acquire French territory. Asked, however, if this assurance included the French colonies, the Chancellor answered that he could not pledge himself equally in that regard. Germany would respect the integrity and neutrality of Holland so long as her adversaries did the same. The operations in Belgium which Germany might be obliged to undertake would depend upon what might be done by France. The Chancellor declared that he had always had in view a good understanding with Britain, and he hoped that these assurances might serve eventually as its basis.

**Britain to stand by France.** On the same day Sir Edward Grey warned the Ambassador at London that he did not wish that the amicable tone of their conversations should produce the impression that Britain would remain quiescent if France became involved in the war. All European interests might then be implicated. He further said that a mediation could not take the form simply of urging Russia to stand aside, while Austria was at liberty to go farther in the punishment of Serbia than she ought. Even while leaving to Serbia a nominal independence, Austria might make her her vassal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> France urged upon England, on the 31st, that Germany's attitude was the more rigid because of uncertainty as to whether England would take part in the war. Sir Edward Grey told

**Germany's proposal denounced as infamous.**  
In Parliament, the proposal of the German Chancellor was denounced by Sir Edward Grey as infamous, as a shameful attempt to bribe British honour. He told the Berlin Government, through Sir W. E. Goschen, that the King could not for an instant entertain the suggestion that Britain should remain neutral under such conditions.

What he asks us, in effect, is [wrote the Secretary] to engage to stand by while the French colonies are taken, and France is beaten, so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies. . . . France . . . could be so crushed as to lose her position as a great Power, and become subordinate to German policy. . . . It would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover. The Chancellor also, in effect, asks us to bargain away whatever obligations or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either. . . . We must preserve our full freedom to act as circumstances may seem to us to require. . . . You . . . should add most earnestly that one way of maintaining good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe.

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the French Ambassador that Germany had not been left with the impression that the British Government would not intervene, but, on the contrary, he had informed Prince Lichnowski that if France and Germany were at war, England would be drawn into it.

There was cold contempt in the British Secretary's manner of rejecting the two bargains. But he demonstrated once again his deep desire for peace when, in spite of his obvious disgust, he authorized Sir W. E. Goschen to go still farther than the above admonition and suggest that, in view of the reciprocal distrust of the governments immediately concerned, the four less interested Powers should guarantee that they would get from Serbia entire satisfaction of the Austrian claims, provided that these did not affect either her rights of sovereignty or her territorial integrity. Later he informed Prince Lichnowski that if Germany and Austria would put forward a reasonable proposition, showing clearly that they were striving for European peace, he would sustain it at Saint Petersburg and Paris; and if Russia and France should then be so unreasonable as to reject it, the government of his Britannic Majesty would wash its hands of the entire consequences, but otherwise, he said, if France were drawn into the conflict, England also would be involved. In his dispatch to Sir E. Goschen regarding the German proposal the British Secretary had added:

And I will say this: If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement, to which Germany could be a party, by which she

could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately.

In all the history of modern diplomacy no broader specific offer, tending to the elimination of aggressive wars, had ever been made.

**Abuse of British good-will.** The British Government's thoroughly pacific disposition was further proved on this day by a step taken by the Foreign Secretary, which the German Ambassador either misunderstood or affected to misunderstand, and to which the Kaiser sought in haste to give an exaggerated interpretation, calculated to exalt before the world both the political power and the moral position of Germany. Sir Edward Grey spoke to the Ambassador by telephone of the possibility of retarding a conflict between Germany and France until a means could be found of bringing Austria and Russia to an understanding. Thereupon Prince Lichnowski telegraphed to von Bethmann-Hollweg that Sir Edward Grey had asked him if he thought he could declare that Germany would not attack France in a Russo-German War if the latter remained neutral; and that he had replied in the affirmative. The Kaiser seized this seeming opportunity of closing a snare upon Britain. He was not content even with Prince Lichnowski's original distortion of Sir Edward Grey's informal and tentative query.

He exaggerated that distortion in a telegram<sup>1</sup> to King George:

**The Kaiser would accept what was never tendered.** I have just received the communication of your government offering me, with the guaranty of Great Britain, the neutrality of France. With this offer was included the question whether on that condition Germany would refrain from attacking France. For technical reasons my mobilization, ordered this morning on two fronts, must be carried out, according to preparations already commenced. It cannot be countermanded, and your telegram<sup>2</sup> has come too late. But if France offers her neutrality, which is also guaranteed by the English armies and fleet, I will abstain from attacking her and will employ my troops elsewhere.

The German Chancellor telegraphed also to the London Embassy that Germany was "ready to acquiesce in the English proposition if England with her military and naval forces guaranteed French neutrality." And he added: "We guarantee, besides, that from now until 7 o'clock on the evening of the 3d [of August] the French frontier shall not be crossed, if by that time the assent of England shall have reached us."

**Fully resolved to attack France.** The motive,

<sup>1</sup> 1st of August, 1914. The above is from the French text.

<sup>2</sup> This telegram had no reference whatever to the question of French neutrality. It was an appeal to the Kaiser not to "mobilize" prematurely.

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again, of the singular alacrity thus displayed by the Kaiser and his ministers was to create distrust among the members of the Triple Entente. An important confession by implication is conveyed in the Kaiser's telegram. It shows that, except in the wholly improbable case of France proving herself base enough to abandon Russia, the Kaiser was fully resolved to attack her. And this was two days prior to Germany's hurried rupture, and while France had as yet made no overt move whatever in contemplation of war.

George V. put an end to this strange jugglery in the guise of negotiation. He replied to the Kaiser that there was, he believed, a misunderstanding, which would be cleared up on the morrow when Sir Edward Grey would see Prince Lichnowski. The ostensible explanation which Prince Lichnowski gave to von Bethmann-Hollweg was that "Sir Edward Grey's suggestions had been made without a previous understanding with France and have since been abandoned as futile." As a matter of fact, the suggestions never had the scope or the positiveness wilfully attributed to them.

**"Germany wants War."**—Viviani. The prospect for peace could hardly have been darker than it was at this moment. Yet the French Premier, Viviani, with a constancy of hope and a fortitude of purpose which may almost be termed heroic, telegraphed on the 1st of August to the French



Ambassadors: "We must still labour for an arrangement." Earlier on the same day, he had informed them that "the attitude of Germany proves that she wants war—and that she wants it against France." Von Schoen had already asked that "personal measures" should be taken in his regard (alluding to his departure from France), and he had provided for the safe-keeping of the archives of the Embassy.

This attitude, indicative of rupture [wrote Viviani], although no precise negative response had been given him,<sup>1</sup> is characteristic of the settled will of Germany to make war upon France. The lack of sincerity in her pacific protestations is demonstrated by the rupture which she imposed upon Europe, when Austria at last, in agreement with Russia, had consented to negotiate.

**German hypocrisy unveiled.** The hypocrisy of Germany, indeed, which was the inspiration of the hypocrisy of Austria-Hungary, could no longer remain even partly veiled. The German Government was fully aware of the new status of the *pourparlers* having in view the stoppage of the military preparations by all the nations concerned, pending an exhaustive examination of the Austro-Serbian question at a conference of the four less interested Powers. The Austrian Ambassador

<sup>1</sup> To the demand as to what attitude France intended to take in relation to a Russo-German conflict.

told the Russian Foreign Minister, on the 1st of August, that his government had no designs on Serbian territory, nor upon Serbian sovereignty, that it repudiated also any intention of occupying the *sandjak* of Novi-Bazar, and that it consented to enter upon a radical discussion of its ultimatum to Serbia. Thereupon Sazonof expressed the opinion that the *pourparlers* ought to take place in London, under direction of the British Government, and he pointed out the importance of Austria immediately suspending her belligerent operations in Serbia.

**Austria's sincerity again in doubt.** The sincerity of Austria's belated acquiescence was questioned by the French Ambassador at Berlin. It was his belief that it was but another ruse to place the seeming responsibility of rupture upon Russia. The ultimatum of Germany, coming immediately afterwards, fully confirmed this view.<sup>1</sup>

It is certain that Austria-Hungary's pretended pacific disposition at the eleventh hour was, if not absolutely false, at least no more than tentative and dependent upon whatever move Germany might next choose to make. The Austrian Ambassador had no precise instructions as to any

<sup>1</sup> Asquith, the British Prime Minister, in his speech at Cardiff, the 2d of October, said: "Towards the end of July, when the Vienna cabinet seemed to realize the peril which confronted it, and showed itself disposed to accept an accommodation with the Petrograd [Saint Petersburg] cabinet, Germany took the matter into her own hands and rendered all conciliation impossible."

detailed method of conciliation. In his conversation with Sazonof he sought to avoid the essential issue as to the safeguarding of the sovereignty and territory of Serbia and to dwell solely on the general relations of his government with Russia. Mr. Sazonof said with emphasis that the real question was whether Austria intended to crush Serbia and to make her her vassal, or whether she purposed to leave Serbia free and independent. So long as this question was not solved it was a loss of time to discuss abstractly the relations of Austria and Russia. The only place where such a discussion could be usefully held was London, and that had been rendered impossible by the bombardment of Belgrade.

**Sazonof on Austro-German duplicity.** To the French and British Ambassadors, Mr. Sazonof remarked that in the Balkan crisis of 1913 he had clearly indicated to Austria that war with Russia would be the unpreventable consequence of an attack upon Serbia.

It is clear [said he] that Austrian domination of Serbia would be as intolerable to Russia as German domination of Holland would be to England. For Russia, in fact, it is a question of life or death. The policy of Austria has been from the first tortuous and destitute of morality. Trusting to the support of her ally, she believes that she can defy Russia with impunity. Germany's policy has been equivocal and two-faced. It matters little whether Germany knew

or did not know the terms of the Austrian ultimatum. That which matters is that Germany intervened at Vienna only when the moment had passed at which her influence could have been exerted. The choice of German representatives at Vienna and Saint Petersburg was not fortunate; the former is a rabid Russophile, who has done nothing but exasperate Austria, and the other has reported to his government that Russia will not fight.

Sir G. Buchanan reported that Sazonof was worn out with his ceaseless efforts to avoid war. He had not refused a single overture.

Germany and Austria-Hungary, by their evasive responses or by formal refusals, had rendered vain every endeavour in favour of peace. Austria-Hungary's military action and the preparations of Germany have forced Russia to "mobilize" and Germany's mobilization has given rise to a desperate situation.

**Kaiser and Tsar "converse" by telegraph.** An exchange of telegrams had been begun between Kaiser Wilhelm and the Tsar Nicholas on the evening of the 28th of July. The Kaiser noted the difficulty of "resisting the manifestations of public opinion." He wrote with unction of the cordial friendship which had united them for so long, and declared that he was using his whole influence to determine Austria-Hungary "to come to a loyal and satisfactory understanding with Russia." He

counted upon the Tsar to aid him in removing all difficulties which might be interposed. The Tsar answered by asking the Kaiser to come at once to his aid.

A shameful war [he wrote] has been declared against a weak nation. I fully share the immense indignation which exists in Russia. I foresee that very soon I shall be unable to resist any longer the pressure which is brought upon me and shall be forced to take measures that will lead to war. To prevent the calamity of a European conflict, I beg thee, in the name of our ancient friendship, to do all that thou canst to prevent thy ally from going too far.

**Wilhelm's self-attributed rôle of mediator.** There is no mistaking the loyal frankness of this language. The tone of the subsequent telegrams of Wilhelm contrasts with it strangely. He immediately seized the pretext of the Tsar's simple request for friendly aid to assume that he himself was to play the dominant rôle of mediator, in a cause in which no one acquainted with his dangerous policies could possibly suppose that he would be impartial.

I cannot [he said] consider the forward step taken by Austria-Hungary as a "shameful war." Austria-Hungary knows by experience that she absolutely cannot trust the promises of Serbia, so long as they

exist only on paper.<sup>\*</sup> In my view, the conduct of Austria-Hungary ought to be considered as an effort to get a full guaranty that the promises of Serbia will be actually carried out. The declaration of the Austrian Cabinet confirms my opinion that Austria-Hungary does not aim at any acquisition of territory to the detriment of Serbia. I think, therefore, that it is entirely possible for Russia, in presence of the Austro-Serbian War, to persevere in her rôle of spectator, without drawing Europe into the most frightful war which it has yet seen. I believe that a direct understanding between thy government and Vienna is possible and desirable, seeing that my government, as I have already telegraphed thee, is trying with all its energy to favour it. Naturally, military measures taken by Russia, which Austria-Hungary may regard as a menace, would hasten a calamity which we are all seeking to avoid, and would at the same time render impossible the mission of mediator which I have accepted in all earnestness in response to thy appeal to my friendship and aid.

**To make Russia appear responsible for the war.** It is hardly possible to avoid reading between the lines of this and subsequent communica-

<sup>\*</sup> It is almost superfluous to note in this place that a few days later Germany gave the true measure of her own solemn promises, when the Chancellor of the Empire, in his final interview with the British Ambassador, characterized the Treaty of 1839, guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium, as a mere "scrap of paper," which ought not to obstruct a great national policy.

tions of Wilhelm to the Tsar. Here the most obvious desire, other than that Russia shall hold herself aloof from the unequal struggle of Serbia against her formidable enemy, is that the Tsar's Government shall be placed in the position of having provoked the greater conflict which must otherwise ensue. It is to be observed that Wilhelm stigmatizes as a menace only Nicholas's military preparations and not those of Franz Josef, nor his own, which for many days have been secretly under way; and that his phraseology in reference to Russia's "rôle of spectator" has a rather patronizing flavour. There is also a patent suggestion of self-righteousness in the profession of special earnestness in the self-attributed mission of mediator.

**The Tsar suggests arbitration.** It was on this day (the 29th) that the German Ambassador at Saint Petersburg had communicated to Sazonof the resolution of his government to put its forces on a full war-footing unless Russia would cease her own military preparations, which had been prompted by the threatening attitude of Austria. The Tsar on that day sent a second telegram to the Kaiser which is highly significant and for that reason, apparently, was omitted from the "white book" which the German ministry laid before the Reichstag on the 3d of August. The Tsar thanked the Kaiser for his "conciliatory and friendly telegram," but added: "Inasmuch as the

official message presented today by thy ambassador to my minister was conveyed in a very different tone, I beg thee to explain this divergency."

It is hardly possible that the Kaiser did not feel the sting of this demand and the incidental comment, which might have implied the discovery of duplicity on his part. But the next sentence of the Tsar must have been still more unpalatable to a sovereign whose representatives at The Hague conferences had invariably betrayed his ulterior prejudice against any general measures to prevent or lessen the calamity of war.

"It would be right," wrote the Tsar, "to give over the Austro-Serbian problem to The Hague Conference."

**The suggestion ignored.** It was to the initiative of Nicholas that The Hague Conference and the establishment of an international peace tribunal had been due. This was the greatest opportunity that had ever been offered for utilizing it. The Kaiser ignored the suggestion.

Wilhelm's next message was a statement to the effect that his ambassador had been ordered to call the attention of the Russian Government to "the dangers and the grave consequences of mobilization." If Russia "mobilized" against Austria-Hungary the mission of mediator with which Wilhelm was charged would fail and "the responsibility of war or peace" would weigh heavily upon the shoulders of the Tsar.



Nicholas, in reply (30th of July), informed the Kaiser that he had sent to him his aide-de-camp,<sup>\*</sup> specially instructed. The military decisions already in force, he said, had been made five days before, as a defence against Austrian preparations. "I hope with all my heart that these measures will have no influence upon thy rôle as mediator which I highly appreciate."

**The Tsar's word of honour.** On the 31st of July, Nicholas thanked Wilhelm for his good purpose, "which permitted a gleam of hope that all might yet end well." "It is technically impossible," he added, "to suspend the military preparations rendered necessary by Austria's mobilization. We are very far from wishing for war. So long as the conferences with Austria with regard to Serbia continue, my troops shall commit no act of provocation. On this I give thee my word of honour."

Later, this same day, Wilhelm telegraphed to Nicholas that, in view of reports of serious war preparations by Russia on the eastern frontier of Germany, he was himself obliged to take defensive measures. Again he indulged in the high accent of virtue, as well as a melodramatic vaunting of his friendship for Russia and the Tsar, while laying further stress upon the responsibility for

<sup>\*</sup> The Tsar's personal aide, General Tateschef, asked the Kaiser in the name of Nicholas II. to bring pressure upon Austria to induce her to accept a reasonable accommodation with Serbia.

war which the latter would incur, if he did not disarm:

I have gone to the utmost possible limit in my efforts to maintain peace. It is not I who shall bear the responsibility of the frightful disaster that now menaces the entire civilized world. At this moment it still rests with thee to prevent it. The honour and puissance of Russia are not threatened by any one, and she may still await the result of my intervention. My friendship for thee and for thy realm, transmitted to me by my grandfather on his bed of death, has ever been sacred to me. I have been faithful to Russia in her afflictions, notably in her last war. The peace of Europe may yet be preserved, if Russia will decide to suspend her military measures, which menace Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Nicholas replied with his usual moderation of tone, but demanded from the German All-Highest War-Lord the same guaranty which he himself had given (namely, his word of honour) that the measures already taken did not signify war, and that they should continue together their anxious efforts for peace. "Our long and tried friendship," he said, "ought to succeed, with God's help, in preventing this effusion of blood."

**Arrogance of the all-highest war-lord.** The dignity of the implied reproach drew from Wilhelm on the 1st of August a final telegram, full of a haughty affectation of superior rectitude:

I indicated yesterday to thy government [he wrote] the only means whereby war could still be avoided. Although I asked for a reply by noon, none has yet reached me. I have been compelled to "mobilize" my army. An immediate, clear, and unequivocal response . . . is the sole means of preventing the incommensurable calamity. I must ask thee unconditionally to give an immediate order to thy troops that they commit no violation, not even the slightest, of our frontiers.

On the heels of this lofty message, Germany's Ambassador delivered an ultimatum of his government to that of Russia. This was in effect that unless, within twelve hours, the latter rescinded its measures of military readiness, not only in reference to Germany, but also to Austria, the former would put her own forces on the footing of war.

**An ultimatum to France.** A little in advance of this summons, Germany had demanded of France an explanation as to her intentions in the event of a Russo-German war, exacting an answer within eighteen hours. Germany had so timed these ultimatums that the responses, if any, should both have reached Berlin at the same hour (1 o'clock) on the 1st of August. Russia did not deign to respond. Viviani told the German Ambassador that France would act in accordance with her interests.

Thus, at the very moment when Russia certainly

and Austria to all appearance were ready to seek an accommodation on the basis of the British proposal, this promising condition was annulled by Germany's attitude, illustrated in the Kaiser's telegrams to the Tsar, and by her brusquely provocative proceedings, by both deed and word.<sup>1</sup>

**King George replies to the Kaiser.** While the Kaiser and the Tsar had been engaged in telegraphic correspondence, a similar exchange had also taken place between King George of England and the Kaiser, and between King George and the Tsar. The Kaiser's brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, addressed to George V., on the 30th of July, a message intimating a threat of warlike preparation by Germany, because of alleged military action by her neighbours. He averred that Germany had taken no preparative steps as yet,<sup>2</sup> and he asked King George to use his influence with France and Russia to induce them to remain neutral in the struggle between Serbia and Austria.

King George on the same day replied that his government was doing its best in suggesting to Russia and France that they stop the movement of their troops on the condition that Austria should content herself with the occupation of Belgrade

<sup>1</sup> "Unfortunately it was too apparent that this disposition (on the part of Austria) was annulled by the attitude of Germany."  
—VIVIANI, Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup> At this time Germany had already sent a Saxon army corps to the Russian frontier.

and the neighbouring territory as security for the settlement of her claims, while the other countries should simultaneously suspend their warlike preparations.

The Kaiser telegraphed to King George that these propositions accorded with his sentiments, but that the Tsar had mobilized his fleet and large Russian forces had already taken position on the East-German frontier. The British King repeated in another dispatch his ardent desire to prevent a rupture among the Powers concerned.

**Violation of Belgium long premeditated.** It is evident that Germany had long intended to invade France by way of Belgium. The reply of the German Chancellor on this head when questioned by order of the British Foreign Secretary had given ground for the most alarming inferences. The German and French Governments had been asked simultaneously whether they would respect the neutrality of Belgium guaranteed by five Great Powers of Europe. At the same time Belgium was informed that Britain assumed that she would maintain her neutrality to the end. The response of France was immediate and affirmative. The German Foreign Minister answered that he would take the orders of the Kaiser on the subject. He doubted that there would be a definite response "as Germany could not thus expose her military plans." The final reply by von Jagow was given on the 4th of August, when he informed Sir W. E.

Goschen that the invasion of Belgium was already begun. Belgium's answer on the 1st had been that she would do her utmost to defend her neutrality, and that she expected the Powers to sustain her. Four days before this, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Davignon, had prepared a circular letter to the governments at Rome, The Hague, and Luxemburg and the Powers signatory of the treaty of neutrality of 1839, declaring that Belgium would observe under all circumstances and with the most scrupulous exactitude her duties as a neutral state. Every measure necessary to the observance and defence of her neutrality was to be taken. The Belgian army was to be massed at strategic points. These measures, said Mr. Davignon, had no other object than to enable Belgium to fulfil her international obligations and were not in any sense inspired by a design to take part in a conflict of the Powers, nor by a sentiment of distrust against any of them. The letter was presented on the 1st of August to the various foreign governments. Sir Edward Grey had meanwhile made it plain to the German representative in London that Britain would no more tolerate a violation of Belgian neutrality by France than by Germany, or any other Power. Furthermore, every action and utterance of the French Government regarding this subject had shown its firm disposition to observe sacredly the neutral rights which it had guaranteed.

**Summons to Belgium to submit.** The German Government, even while the question of the neutrality of France, was under discussion, evinced the bad faith of its procedure and its own lack of belief in the interpretation given by Prince Lichnowski to Sir Edward Grey's telephonic communication, by sending, on the 2d of August, a summons to the Belgian Government to permit the passage of the Imperial troops to the French frontier, with the alternative menace of coercion, in case of refusal. This ultimatum followed close on a notification to the Berlin Government that France had given formal assurance that there would be no incursions of her troops into Belgian territory, even though Belgian troops should be massed on her frontier. The Belgian Foreign Minister had asked of the German Minister Plenipotentiary, von Below-Saleske, that his government give a like assurance of its purpose to respect the neutrality of the kingdom.

**Feigned knowledge of proposed French invasion.** Than the German summons to the little kingdom of Belgium nothing more brutally presumptuous, more cynically perfidious, is to be found in modern history. It sets forth that the German Government has received certain information that the French intend to advance along the River Meuse by way of Givet and Namur, thus permitting no doubt that they mean to march through Belgium against Germany. The German Govern-

ment cannot but fear that Belgium unaided would not be able to repulse the widely extended French advance in a manner to assure a sufficient protection to Germany. It would regret exceedingly that Belgium should regard as a hostile act the violation of her territory, which Germany is forced by her enemies to commit. It pledges itself, provided that Belgium will assume towards it an attitude of amicable neutrality, to guarantee her integrity and independence; to evacuate her territory as soon as peace shall be concluded; to pay cash for all supplies taken for the German troops, and to make good any damage which they may cause in the kingdom. But, on the other hand, if Belgium should show herself hostile to the German troops, particularly if she resist their advance in any manner whatsoever, the German Government, to its great regret, will be obliged to deal with her as an enemy. In that case, Germany would pledge herself to nothing at all as regards the future, but would leave the settlement of the relations of the two states to the arbitrament of arms.

The Belgian Government refused to obey this insolent summons, incompatible with its rights and honour, and again declared its intention of resisting invasion by all the means in its power.

There is no doubt that Germany counted upon Belgium becoming ultimately her prey, whether the proposed invasion had been tamely accepted



or not. Once the Belgian soil was occupied by German troops, pretexts would easily have been found or invented for declaring that the government or the people had violated the conditions previously imposed. This contingency entered into the calculations of the Kaiser's counsellors. German success in the war would surely have meant the extinction of Belgian independence.

**King George to the Tsar and the Tsar to King George.** British and French statesmen had now exhausted every pacific recourse. The final effort had been made by George V. of England. On the 1st of August he had sent a personal telegram to the Tsar, reciting the German Government's statement as to its reasons for the ultimatum addressed to Russia. The King declared that he could not help thinking that a misunderstanding had produced this deadlock.

I am most anxious not to miss any possibility of avoiding the terrible calamity which threatens the whole world. I therefore make a personal appeal to you to remove the misapprehension which I feel must have occurred, and to leave still open grounds for negotiation and possible peace. If you think that I can in any way contribute to that all-important purpose, I will do everything in my power to assist in reopening the interrupted conversations between the Powers concerned.

The Tsar's response to this message set forth that Austria wished to crush Serbia and to make

her her vassal; that this would upset the balance of power in the Balkans, which was of vital interest to his Empire; that every proposal of accommodation had been rejected by Germany and Austria, and that Germany had shown no disposition to mediate until the propitious moment had passed, and even then would not bring forward any precise proposal; that complete mobilization by Austria-Hungary, the concentration of her troops in Galicia, and secret military preparations made by Germany had compelled him to order the general mobilization of his own forces, and that he was justified in doing so, as had been proven by Germany's sudden declaration of war, made in spite of his own positive assurance that his troops would not advance so long as efforts at mediation continued: "In this solemn hour," he concluded, "I wish to assure you once more that I have done all in my power to avert war. Now that it has been forced upon me, I trust that your country will not fail to support France and Russia. God bless and protect you."

**Germany's self-deception.** Germany had deluded herself, or had pretended to delude herself, until very late, with the idea that Britain would not take part in a continental war which did not directly jeopard her political, industrial, or commercial interests. This fact explains a considerable part of Germany's diplomatic inconsistency. She had reckoned, in the first instance, upon Rus-

sia being restrained by fear and the consciousness of disorganization. The Tsar's resolute calm and the unity in patriotic sentiment of the Russian people had dissipated that notion. But she proceeded, ostensibly at least, upon the other hypothesis even after she had allowed the British Government clearly to understand that in all probability she would violate Belgian territory. The German Ambassador at Saint Petersburg, on the 30th of July, in an interview with Sazonof, was overcome with emotion when he realized that war was inevitable unless Germany and Austria assumed a new attitude. His sensibility did him credit, particularly if, like most German statesmen, he underestimated the terrific cost that would fall to the lot of his own Fatherland.

**The German Chancellor's tirade: the "scrap of paper."** At the last interview<sup>1</sup> of Sir W. E. Goschen with the German Chancellor, after Britain's ultimatum as to the neutrality of Belgium had been delivered, the latter also showed emotion, but of a very different kind. Were it to be regarded as expressive of the mood of the Kaiser and the German military caste, it might well be likened to the rage of a baffled bully. Von Bethmann-Hollweg had no personal trait in common with a bully; but it is not unjust in this instance to opine that he voiced a sentiment which was stronger, as the French say, than himself, the

<sup>1</sup> 4th of August.

sentiment of the master and of the despotic class of which he was but the mouthpiece. Germany had tried alternately to browbeat and to wheedle all of the Powers which were opposed to her greedy policy. She had failed in this and in her attempts to paralyse them with anticipative terror. Her diplomacy had come to naught and was in total disarray. No recourse was left her except her boasted superiority in material force, scientifically armed and brutally directed. Von Bethmann-Hollweg inadvertently exposed the rottenness at the core of Germany's professions of just principle and good-neighbourliness. For twenty minutes, in a passionate strain, he harangued the British Ambassador. Most terrible, he said, was the step taken by the British Government. "Just for a word—'neutrality,' a word which in war-time had so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper, Great Britain would make war upon a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her." He exclaimed, wrote Sir W. E. Goschen, that what we had done was unthinkable. It was like striking a man from behind, while he was fighting for his life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen.

**The cost of national honour.** Von Jagow had told the Ambassador that it was absolutely necessary for German security, in fact, a matter of life or death, that an advance against France be made

across Belgian territory. The Ambassador now insisted that it was equally for Britain's honour a matter of life or death that she should keep her solemn engagement to defend the neutrality of Belgium. The Chancellor demanded: "But at what price will that compact have been kept?" The Ambassador in reply clearly hinted that "consequences were not to be regarded as an excuse for the breaking of solemn engagements"; but the Chancellor was in so excited a state, so evidently overmastered by the news of the British action, that further argument would have been equivalent to casting oil on the flames.

The Chancellor's question, whether Britain had counted the cost of keeping her honour untarnished, was the last phrase of this long and changeful debate, by written and spoken word, between the forces of peace, on the one hand, and those of terror and destruction on the other. The debate of modern death-engines had not waited for this end. Their thunders were already heard.

**Many declarations of war.** Declarations of war quickly followed, one upon another. The first had been that of Austria-Hungary against Serbia; the second, on the same day, that of Montenegro against Austria-Hungary<sup>1</sup>; Then came those of Germany against Russia, on the 1st of August; Germany against France, the 3d of August; Germany against Belgium, the 4th of

<sup>1</sup> 28th of July, 1914.

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August; Great Britain against Germany, the 5th of August; Austria-Hungary against Russia, the 6th of August; France against Austria-Hungary, and Great Britain against Austria-Hungary, the 12th of August; Japan against Germany, the 23d of August; and Austria-Hungary against Belgium, the 28th of August.

There were important events linking these together, essential elements in the first stage of the general conflict, which must be told in subsequent pages.

## CHAPTER V

### ASSIDUOUS TEACHING OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIGHT AND CUNNING IN MODERN GERMANY

Origin and Growth of Scientific Barbarism—Repression of Spontaneity of Thought and Sentiment—A False System of Economy and the Dangers Bred by it—The Cult of War—Wilhelm II. Calls himself at Once the Vicegerent of the Christian God and the "Protector" of 300 millions of Moslems—Also, although a Protestant Monarch, the Pious Servant of the Virgin Mary—Bloody Instructions to his Soldiers in 1900—"Prussianization" of the German Nation—Cynicism under Cover of a False *Bonhomie*, the Stigma of the Hohenzollerns—Iniquitous Influence of German Political Literature—The Grosser Machiavellism of Treitschke and his Followers—The German Claim to Everything that is Best in the World—Germany Considers herself the Conscience of Mankind. The Pan-Germanic Movement—The Kaiser and his Subjects reciprocally Feed Each Other with Illusions.

WHAT was the spirit respectively of the nations directly interested in this stupendous conflict? The answer to this question should shed a clear light upon the character of the conflict itself. It must chiefly be found in what had been set before these nations to learn; what they had actually learned from

teaching and experience, and the deeds and the manner whereby the effects of such teaching and experience were manifested.

**Idealism in Germany steadily diminished.** Since the time of their emergence from savagery, the principal aims of the Prussian people had always been grossly material. There was, it is true, a period of idealistic production, simultaneous with the great impulse to literature and art in England and France; but, except in the domain of music and poetry, it affected the common mass but little. After the Hohenzollern Empire was established, those material aims, by various processes, were imposed upon the rest of Germany. There remained a considerable degree of idealism in the non-Prussian Germans down to the Bismarckian period; but for more than forty years after Wilhelm I. was made Emperor at Versailles this had steadily diminished. The profit and pleasure of the spirit, of the finer, intangible self, was valued hardly at all, in comparison with the profit and gratification of the coarser, physical self. To increase that profit and gratification, the energies of the nation, both mental and bodily, were specially trained and bent. The German nature is tractable; readily and patiently submissive to recognized leaders and masters. The rank growth of the material philosophy of life stifled all other philosophies, except those of the most theoretical and therefore most useless sort. Education became mechanical,



rigid in its forms, crushing in its discipline. No pupil found peace in junior German schools until he had given himself up absolutely to this intellectual tyranny. The essential object of the pedagogue was to make each individual an automaton, as nearly like all other individuals as possible, so far as his participation in the tasks which the State had set itself was concerned.<sup>1</sup> An utterly false idea of civilization was thus established. The tendency of this, in harmony with the absolutism in divinely appointed authority claimed by the head of the dynasty, was to repress spontaneity of thought, to bar original effort. Brain and will were to be as far as possible independent of sentiment, and above all, of humane suggestiveness. Literary, pedagogical, social, industrial, commercial, political, and military endeavour were all to be the mere working of a comprehensive mechanism; and the sum total of its effects on the nation and the world was what was distinctively and fatuously known as German *Kultur*. Generous impulses of natural sympathy for the rest of mankind were lacking. The modern German, of ordinary attainments, living in his own land, had no practical conception of true liberty and of well-balanced government. Neither Germany herself nor Germanic Austria had ever sacrificed a life for the greater benefit of another nation.

<sup>1</sup> The suicide of children is no rare thing in Germany. The severe educational exactions put upon the very young are the cause of it.

Perfect proof that German character had been made what it was, when the Great War began, by assiduous teaching of generation after generation is to be found in the entire correspondence of cause and effect. The mass of the people were to be pitied as well as blamed. Could they have been emancipated from vicious mental leadership and have attained individually to a certain moral independence, the type of despotism personified in Wilhelm II. would not have been possible in Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By excessive specialization, certain excellencies of mind and temperament became faults. Their forced development upon fixed and restricted lines then constituted a formidable danger. German habits of thought relative to material power and gain were abnormal. The straining of the people in this direction, under the control of an autocratic monarchy, a military aristocracy, a slavish bureaucracy, the sudden leap from national poverty to individual and national wealth, after the new industrial and commercial policy was inaugurated, caused the ideals of the good and the true to fall far into the background and to be largely forgotten. Many periodical visitors to Germany made mournful note of this constant decadence.

**A false system of economy.** If Germany could have lived wholly within a sphere of her own, as did China for thousands of years, her immersion in materialism would have been merely

a self-burial and would have inflicted only negative injury upon the world. This, however, was not possible, owing to the relatively small area of her Empire and the very rapid increase of her population. For fully half a century emigration was a sane relief from her internal congestion. But after America had drawn to herself many millions of Germans, particularly in consequence of a system of universal military servitude that grew more and more onerous after the Franco-Prussian War, there was a general effort in Germany to discourage that movement. The greatest counter-motive that was brought into play was that of industrial development. In her excessive stimulation of manufactures Germany imitated the fallacious policy which in America, after the War of Secession, had so quickly brought into being a wholly artificial economic system. In the later case, however, there was not the same partial justification that had existed in America. The latter's area, her resources, her population, relatively small at the commencement of the régime of economic exclusiveness, but rapidly increasing, rendered it easy for her to create markets within her own limits for the new output of her industries. Germany could not in like manner expand her general and, in particular, her agricultural productiveness, to keep pace with her growth in numbers. The economic policy of the Empire aggravated a condition which would have been

grave enough, even though emigration had continued, as theretofore, and if industrialism had not been stimulated beyond the normal needs of the people, or of the conservative extension of their commerce. This system was a part, however, of Germany's daring plan for forcing the solution of her own destinies. Her people were to be taught to believe that theirs was the indisputable right to a complete domination of the world, covering all the phases of modern civilized life. As no natural excuse for such an ambition existed, she at once set to work to create one.

The directors of the Imperial rule knew that the abnormal economic system which they were founding would prove an irresistible means of carrying the German nation to the point of accepting war, as a necessity of its existence and as a duty unto itself, whenever its leaders should give the concerted signal of conquest. The whole reign of Wilhelm II. had in view not alone the object of making the mass of his younger male subjects into a body of perfect warriors, but of subduing the entire spirit of the people to the grim gospel of war.

**The cult of war.** Wilhelm himself presents a psychological phenomenon, less rare than it is remarkable. His creed of kingship and of war. was a kind of mysticism which reminds one of the moral or unmoral traits attributed to the ancient conquerors who impudently, though perhaps sincerely, styled themselves the instruments of

God or the Gods, and his or their lieutenants upon earth. And yet Wilhelm II. regarded the great Frederick, who was a sceptic as well as a cynic, as his own especial prototype. His actions, however, indicated a subconscious imitation, not only of Frederick the Great, but also of the victorious Kings of Judea, of Alexander the Great, of Cæsar, Attila, Yenghis Khan, Soliman the Magnificent, Saint Louis, and Napoleon. Of his grandfather, the first Emperor of modern Germany, he said in a public address: "Had this exalted monarch lived in the Middle Ages he would have been canonized and pilgrims would have come from all lands to offer up prayers before his relics." Wilhelm merged his real cult of war in his ostensible worship of God. For him the God of Protestantism, *der alter deutscher Gott*, was the great Thor, the war-god of the savage Teutons, the bloodthirsty Jehovah of the Hebrews, in one.<sup>1</sup> This con-

<sup>1</sup> The true type of the Hohenzollern conception of *der alter deutscher Gott* differed, however, from that of the noble Thor of the skalds. The former was the object of worship and human sacrifice by the Semones, the strictly German indigenes of that part of the ancient march of Brandenburg in which the capital of Prussia and of the later German Imperial federation was developed in modern times. Tacitus mentions this god, Tuiston or Tott, as having chief dominion over war. To propitiate him men were slain, as in the Druidic rites, upon his rude altar in a "sacred wood," the remains of which are within the immediate environs of Berlin. The spirit of the Semones, more than that of the Borussians, who dwelt to the north-eastward in Prussia and Pomerania, seems to have descended into the mediæval Brandenburgers and by them to have been instilled into the other North-German nationalities.

glomerate God he appropriated wholly to himself and to his people.

Even if their writers had not already begun to spread the idea that the Germans were the "elect of God," Wilhelm himself would certainly have done so. For his most criticized acts he claimed the sanction and the aid of deity. He styles himself the *summus episcopus*, the supreme bishop of his church; he speaks of God as "our old ally," who has taken endless trouble with the Brandenburg principality and the House of Hohenzollern; he proclaims that "we Hohenzollerns take our crown from God alone and to God alone are we responsible"; he appeals in the same breath to God and to the German sword to help him to defend the royal and Imperial patrimony; the army he declares to be "the main pillar of the Prussian throne, to which God's decree has called me"; in a public prayer he says: "We boast, O Lord, that thou aidest us"; in one of his manifestoes at the commencement of the Great War he exclaims: "Forward with God, who will be with us as He was with our ancestors"; referring to a military movement directed by the Crown Prince, he telegraphs to the Crown Princess: "God has been on his side and has brilliantly supported him";

\* This reminded the satirists of a message sent by the German to the Austrian Kaiser, congratulating the latter upon having been "a brilliant second" to him in the negotiations that followed the first Moroccan crisis.

and, addressing some of his troops who are leaving for the zone of battle, he admonishes them: "Remember that the German people are the chosen of God. On me—on me as the German Emperor—the spirit of God has descended: I am his weapon, his sword, his vicegerent. Woe to the disobedient! Death to cowards and unbelievers!"

**Protector of three hundred million Moslems.** There may have been a certain sincerity in the politico-religious mysticism of the Kaiser. One can believe that even a madman, according to his light, is sincere. But if Wilhelm II. were sincere in this, it does not follow that he was equally so in all the actions that were inspired by it, or that it justified in his eyes. In order to gain the confidence of the Turkish people, he had visited and flattered the "Red Sultan," Abd-ul-Hamid; yet when, in 1894-95, Christians were being massacred by the many thousands in Armenia, he made no effort whatever to save them, nor any public sign of disapproval; and in 1913, when all the Great Powers, under the leadership of Russia, had agreed to the desirability of an accord in order to compel the Sublime Porte to relieve that province of oppression, assassination, and rapine, Germany was the only one that raised any objection to action of a practical nature—and that on the ground that the affair was a delicate one, since the Armenians themselves had not always been exempt from

blame, and as, after all, they formed only a minority of the population, and, further, because interference from without, under the plan proposed would tend to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire!

The head of a royal house which had always been conspicuously identified with extreme Lutheranism, yet Wilhelm II. sought to convince the Turks that he was the special friend and "protector" of the 300,000,000 Moslems in the world, and afterwards to evoke on their part a so-called "holy war" with all the fanatical horrors which the term implies against the Christian rivals of Germany. The editors of Turkish journals accepted in such good faith his posturing before the faithful followers of Mahomet that they bestowed upon him the significant title of "his Islamic Majesty," and one of them, in March, 1915, even announced his expected arrival at Constantinople "with his imperial harem."<sup>\*</sup> Wilhelm was credibly accused, in the early months of the war, of having tried to make use of the pious veneration in which the Virgin Mary is held by Roman Catholics in Poland and of their belief in the persistence of miracles

<sup>\*</sup> The *Servet-i-Fuân*, a journal of Constantinople, declared that "his Islamic Majesty," Wilhelm II., had made his state entry to Paris, and had delivered a speech from the "throne" of the Chamber of Deputies, offering his Imperial hand to be kissed by the members, "who were deeply touched by his magnanimity."



to influence them to give welcome and aid to his soldiery.<sup>1</sup>

It was consistent with the pretension that they were the people of God that Germans should have been taught to regard themselves, like the Hebrews of old, as relieved of all need of cultivating the goodwill of or respecting the rights of other peoples. On a photo-portrait of himself which he gave to an old classmate of his University of Bonn the Kaiser had written the insolent and cruel motto: *Oderint, dum metuant* ("Let them hate if but they fear"). Thus he foreshadowed the set purpose of his reign, to terrorize the nations around him, and even those beyond the seas, by menace and the monstrous use of force.

The sentiment of self-concentration, so inherent in the ancient Jews, is also apparent in those

<sup>1</sup> A proclamation in the name of Wilhelm II. was published in a German journal in Poland, in the following terms:

"Polanders, you doubtless remember that on a certain night the bells of the monastery of Siatogorsky rang of themselves, and that all pious people understood that this miracle meant the coming of a great event. That event was the decision which I had taken to make war upon Russia, to restore to Poland her own religion, and to annex her to the great country of civilization, Germany. I had a marvellous dream: The Virgin appeared to me, and she commanded me to save her convent, which was in danger. She gazed at me with eyes filled with tears, and at once I pledged myself to obey her divine injunction. Know this, Polanders, and welcome my soldiers as your saviours and your brothers. God and the Holy Virgin are with me on my march. It is she who has drawn the sword of Germania to succour Poland!"

other often-quoted words of the Prussian ruler: "For me mankind ends at the Vosges Mountains."

**The "Hun" speech.** An illustration of what he meant in this declaration was given in the address which he delivered in July, 1900, to the soldiers whom he was sending to China to punish the "Boxer" rebels, who had murdered his ambassador and other persons of Caucasian race. It was not justice that he preached but vengeance, and the latent ferocity of his nature was obvious in his words:

Remember when you meet the foe, that no quarter will be given and that no prisoners will be taken. Whoever falls into your hands will be forfeit to you. Just as the Huns under Attila, a thousand years ago, made a name for themselves which is still mighty in tradition and story, so wield your weapons that for a thousand years to come no Chinaman will ever dare to look at a German askance.

And the Kaiser dared at the end, to couple with this expression of his bloodthirstiness a final invocation of the blessing of God: "May He vouchsafe to you to find in that far-off land, a path for Christianity. For this you have pledged yourselves to me with your oath to the colours." And this was the same monarch who before the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem spoke of Christian charity and goodwill!

Future times may recognize in Wilhelm II., whom one of his learned sycophants styled "the

delight of the human race,"<sup>1</sup> a complex and (in many respects) a self-contradictory nature. He had the distorted vision of the half-sane; the facile talent and the brilliancy of speech and ready adaptability of phrase and manner of the charlatan; but no profound proficiency whatever. Voluntarily or involuntarily, he blinded himself to realities. But, however charitable the judgment which may be given as to his mental responsibility, the fearful crimes of his soldiers in the Great War, which were fully authorized by their principal chiefs, must eternally stamp him as one of the worst leaders of men that the world has ever seen. Not all Germans, certainly, nor nearly all, could be capable of such utter barbarity, carried out with the cold method of a calculating mania, unless coerced into it by the strongest governing force known to them.

**The German nation morally Prussianized.** There is nothing at all to uphold the opinion of certain apologists for Wilhelm II. that he was any better in moral fibre than the majority of his subjects. The contrary is probably true. It may, however, remain a moot point, whether he influenced the feudal caste less or more than it influenced him. The German nation had been fashioned in the image of this petty nobility. It had been morally "Prussianized." It was Treitschke's opinion that the Hohenzollerns were not at

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Adolf Lassen.

all superior to other German families except in the fact that they were royal and that they knew how to hold to their power. Side by side with this may be placed the anathematical view of an eminent French author: "The human type most destitute of humanity is the Prussian noble."<sup>1</sup>

Certain it is that in most respects Wilhelm II. was fairly representative of his people; that they had in him the kind of sovereign most likely to please them. He and his chief advisers and the aristocratic and bureaucratic groups which stood close to them systematically "coached" the obedient masses into a blind support of his policies; nor did they find it difficult to do so. These policies agreed with the chief traits of the German character, because for three centuries and more that character had steadily been moulded to receive and accept them. The Imperial régime simply pursued the sequence of the teachings and examples of Frederick Wilhelm I. and Frederick the Great. Dull docility was the temperamental habit of the German peasant. Politically he was a child and believed everything that was authoritatively told him, receiving all his social and moral ideas from above.<sup>2</sup> The barbarous discipline of

<sup>1</sup> Treitschke himself declared that the Berliner, who in his manners, more than any other representative German bourgeois, apes the small Prussian nobility, was "the most unbearable person in Deutschland."

<sup>2</sup> "In Teutonic lands," wrote Stirling Taylor, "democracy is more a superstition than a fact."

the army, instituted by Frederick Wilhelm revived in its full force by Moltke and continued down to the opening of the Great War, had never in the course of three hundred years provoked a general disposition to revolt, although Frederick the Great himself had confessed on one occasion that he stood in greater fear of his own soldiers than of the enemy. Frederick Wilhelm gave the keynote of government to his successors. He believed, as an English writer has said, "that a people could be court-martialled into righteousness; that a state could be bullied into order." So far as his own subjects were concerned, he was right.

**The born stigma of the Hohenzollerns.** The War of 1870 having brought the whole of Germany under the Prussian tradition, Wilhelm II. merely continued in a flamboyant way the work of the early Hohenzollerns. Personal absolutism was their guiding principle.<sup>1</sup> In spite of a superficial and acquired *bonhomie*, cynicism and hardness of heart were the born stigma of the Hohenzollerns. There was conjoined to this an instinctive aptitude for the austere outward restraints of the Lutheran Church; yet, in the course of time, Germany developed a more empty form of scep-

<sup>1</sup> "The Prussian has robbed the German of his birthright."—Professor McELROY.

"The Germans are governed more completely from Berlin and Potsdam than ever the French were from Paris and Versailles."—CHARLES SAROLEA (1912).

ticism as to the whole meaning of religion than any other nation, and the logical concomitant was a dissoluteness and coarseness of private manners, an excess of self-indulgence, equally without comparison in the modern world.<sup>1</sup>

A British diplomatic representative<sup>2</sup> at the Court of Frederick the Great gave the following confidential sketch of his character:

The basis of his Majesty's conduct from the time he mounted the throne to this day seems to have been the considering of mankind in general, and particularly those over whom he was destined to reign, as beings created merely to be subservient to his will and conducive to the carrying into execution of whatever might tend to augment his power and extend his dominions. . . . I have seen him weep at a tragedy; known him to pay as much care to a sick greyhound as a fond mother would to a favourite child; and yet the next day he has given orders for the devastating of a province, or by a wanton increase of taxes made a whole district miserable. . . . He often appears, and really is, humane, benevolent, and friendly; yet, the instant he acts in his royal capacity, these attributes forsake him, and he carries with him desolation, misery, and persecution, wherever he goes.

**The might of the upper hand.** Frederick the Great's morality, or rather his unmorality, as to

<sup>1</sup> The new philosophy of Germany is to destroy Christianity, as a sickly sentimentalism regarding sacrifice for others."—ASQUITH.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*.

international dealings is tersely indicated in his saying: "When one had an advantage is he to use it or not?"<sup>1</sup> The implied principle betrays itself to the full in the foreign policy of modern Germany. The Imperial monarchy is to be wholly identified in the general nature of its aims with the Prussian monarchy, of which it is simply the extension. Its basis is Machiavellism, reduced to the most brutal practical terms. Under Frederick the Great, military rule, severer than that of Sparta or of Rome, forced the people to conform to it, even in their principles, their habits of thought,

<sup>1</sup> Treitschke recalled in one of his lectures that Frederick was "full of poetical whims and fancies, always with a touch of sentimentalism"; that "he gives, on the same day, an order for the inroad upon Silesia and celebrates in an ode the quiet peace of country life." To seize Silesia, he attacked by surprise the troops of the Empress Maria Theresa, after he had lulled her, by his hypocritical wiles, into a false sense of security. Wilhelm II. also paid tribute to the poetic muse, but in harmony with his bellicose rôle. His ode to Ægir, "lord of oceans," evidently conceived in honour of the new German navy, closes with these lines:

"Wherever in the battle  
'Gainst steel the steel is thrust,  
And foemen, in death's rattle,  
Are made to bite the dust—  
Then shall we raise in conquest  
Our sword and shield to thee,  
Who, 'midst the storm and tempest,  
Giv'st victory on the sea."

(DUDLEY WALTON, *Translator.*)

This ode was a fitting precursor to the *Hymn of Hate*, which all Germany sang in the early months of the Great War.

as well as in their social life. The inordinate ambition of the dynasty made its power essentially grasping and aggressive. This power was to be forever armed for war because its preferred object was to conquer and oppress. Montesquieu wrote that such a power, if sufficiently resolute and relentless, was certain to subject the whole world to its yoke. In a rare pamphlet, directed against Frederick and published in London in the year 1762, it is declared that "no scruple, no principle, no treaty can prevent the Prussians from extorting money from their neighbours, from pillaging them methodically, from ruining, destroying, sacking, robbing, violating, from committing every species of crime." Mommsen, one of the greatest German historians, said that the Teutons took the Romans as their models. Tacitus, whom he is fond of citing, informs us that their resources were war and pillage; that it appeared painful to them "to gain by sweat what they could get by blood." But Mommsen elsewhere warns his countrymen to take care lest, by materialism and the loss of the higher ideals, the State become exclusively military. This warning was in truth a prophecy. Others before him had perceived the potential destructivity of his race. Talleyrand, in a dispatch to Louis XVIII., in 1814, when Prussia, with Russia's aid, tried to obtain the sanction of the Congress of Vienna for the annexation of Saxony, said:



The unity of Germany, from which France might have nothing to fear so long as she possessed Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine, would now be of great consequence. Besides, who can foresee the results of putting in motion a mass such as Germany is, when once its divided elements begin to agitate and to blend? Who knows where the impulse, once started, will end?

And a much quoted Germanophile writer, an English renegade, referring in the twentieth century to old as well as new Germany: "We can regret only one thing: that the German did not exterminate more completely, wherever his conquering arm was felt. . . . True history begins from the moment the German with mighty hand seizes the inheritance of antiquity."<sup>1</sup>

**Iniquitous influence of German political literature.** The great and surprisingly easy triumph of 1870-71 inoculated the German people with the same mania of dominion which had long held its sway over the royal house and the military caste. Out of this grew a "delirium of grandeur" beyond any like obsession to which any nation had ever been subject. A nation's traits and its conduct must always react upon each other. So long as the latter is for the most part crowned with success, the reciprocal effect is that of exaggerated stimulation. It is inevitable that the

<sup>1</sup> Houston Chamberlain.

common tendency should find expression by the organ of leading minds and that this expression should bear the fruit of persuasion and suggestion. Thus were engendered the most iniquitous influences in German political literature. A people with whom narrow specialization is the chief practical principle of life accepts most readily the counsel of philosophic charlatans, such as Heinrich von Treitschke.

It was in the natural order of things that a Treitschke and others of his kind should develop into a doctrinal system the rule of political conduct left as a legacy by a Frederick and which Bismarck synthesized in his savage dictum: "Where the power of Prussia is in question, I know no law."<sup>1</sup>

The arrogant formula that the possession of power justifies its exercise in whatever direction or for whatever object human selfishness or human perversity may suggest already underlay the philosophy of Hegel. A hideous corruption of patriotism permeated, from high to low, the thought of Germany. Even the universities taught the ideology of war.

**The doctrine of Treitschke.** It is not surprising that, with such authority behind it, Treitschke's grosser Machiavellism found a wide and eager welcome from the educated classes of Germany. For him, as between nations, the golden

<sup>1</sup> "Wo Preussens Macht in Frage kommt, kenne ich kein Gesetz."

rule of Christianity could not exist. The State, he wrote, was the highest form to which human society could attain; in the history of the world, there existed nothing above it, the State was a power, and the power of the State was the vehicle of civilization whereof that of Germany was the ultimate type. Power and expediency were the sole criterions of right. Hence there could be no finality in international obligations; they were always dependent upon the selfish interests of the State, and treaties were always to be made with this mental reservation. And hence the glorification of war, which was the normal arbiter of right and wrong as between states. The two chief functions of the State were to administer the law within its borders and to make war. The small state was ludicrous, and of all political sins that of weakness was the most reprehensible and the most contemptible; it was, in politics, "the sin against the Holy Ghost." This blasphemy is completed by the tenet, common to Treitschke and to Helmuth von Moltke, the elder, that "war is an ordinance set by God." Treitschke said further: "We have learned to know the moral majesty of war in the very thing that to superficial observers appears brutal and inhuman." And again: "He who knows history knows that it would positively be a mutilation of human nature if we tried to banish war from the world."

**Marriage of science and barbarism.** But

Treitschke descended even a step lower and brazenly declared in effect that international right did not exist; that engagements between states were only valid while the conditions under which they were subscribed remained unchanged. The logical meaning of this doctrine, as interpreted by Bernhardi and others, was that the might acquired by Germany conferred a mysterious prestige and authority upon all that was German, be it even servility, grossness, scoundrelism, or wanton cruelty. Bernhardi, echoing Clausewitz as well as Treitschke, made himself chiefly the blatant high-priest of war, an exponent of scientific barbarism. The marriage of science and barbarism must be regarded as one of the most signal culminations of the era of "blood and iron," inaugurated by Bismarck and Moltke and developed to its most terrible significance under Wilhelm II.<sup>1</sup>

**Extension of the Treitschke doctrine.** A flock of fanatical and imitative writers reiterated, with Bernhardi, or adapted to their slightly varied trend of thought, the diabolical teachings of Treitsch-

<sup>1</sup> Bismarck in 1871 gave this explanation of his theory of terrorism in war: "If we cannot provide troops for the whole of the territory which we occupy, we send a flying column from time to time among the recalcitrant communities. We shoot, hang, and burn. After that has been done several times, they end by becoming reasonable." Field Marshal, von der Goltz records his own opinion as follows: "Inexorability and seemingly hideous callousness are necessary to him who would achieve success in war."

ke. They preached the "sanctity of war"; declared that it was a divine institution; that it was nobler than the dispensing of justice; that it was the only efficient school of heroism, an essential of political ideal, the force which propagated the finest flower of civilization, "the greatest factor in the furtherance of culture"; that the necessity of war was "a fatal biological law," the supreme law which determined what is just; that the State cannot commit a crime, but is a law unto itself, and that its highest duty is to increase its power; that between one state and another there can be no law; that the observance of treaties is not a question of right, but of interest; that in spite of all treaties, the weak are ever the prey of the strong, and that this may even be qualified as moral, since it is rational; that no weak nation has the right to exist as a strong one; that the "survival of the fittest" is a political as well as a biological principle; that a war of conquest is as legitimate as a defensive war; and that the maintenance of peace ought never to be a political aim. Two of Treitschke's most shameless insults to reason and to the sentiment of the refined portion of mankind became the favourite texts of his followers: "War is the only remedy for ailing nations"; and "The living God will see to it that war constantly recurs as a dreadful medicine for the human race."

The chiefs of the Intellectuals, who later denied

in the face of absolute evidence that Germany had provoked the war and that the German army had committed atrocious crimes in Belgium and France, could not refrain from this avowal of their debased and narrow conception of culture: "Without our militarism our civilization would have been annihilated long ago. It was to protect our civilization that militarism was born in our country." And they also declared: "The German people are the elect of God and their enemies are His enemies." The German historian Lamprecht proudly likened the economic interests of Germany, extending themselves to every part of the world, to the tentacles of an octopus. "The cult of force," he said, "is characteristic of the epoch of free enterprise. That which constitutes the strength of the army and fleet is the war-mechanism created by capitalism. The moral value of a form of culture is its force. Culture exists in order to manifest itself as force." And the Kaiser said to his soldiers, after telling them to slaughter the Chinese without mercy: "Go, pave the way, once and for all, for civilization." Corpses, cemented together with blood, were to constitute this ethical pavement. Thus was it acknowledged that force was the very soul of the German so-called culture!

**The German claim to everything that is good.** The so-called Intellectuals thus elaborated the scientific justification of wrong into a system more audacious, more comprehensive, more pernicious,

than could have entered into the thought of a Machiavelli. They sought to strengthen it by claiming as chiefly belonging to the German nation everything of worth or good repute in the whole realm of logic, literature, learning, and moral and political achievement. No pretension was so wild, or so broad, as to deter them. Writers were found esteemed of the public, who made absurd arguments to show that the greatest men who had lived were all more or less of German origin. The French philosophical author, Boutroux, commenting upon this fact, said, in his incisively ironical vein:

Thus everything which is German is by that very fact unique and inimitable; everything that is excellent in the world belongs actually and of right to Germany. Rembrandt, Shakespeare, Ibsen are Germans. It is doubtful even if Jeanne d'Arc, that admirable heroine, is French; learned researches lead to the conclusion that she was of German nationality. If the Alsatians and the Lorrainers are faithful to France, that proves of itself that they should be German subjects, since fidelity is a German virtue.

There were German writers who went still farther than the immediate disciples of Treitschke and found a respectful audience while they strove to demonstrate that Jesus of Nazareth was of the Teutonic race. Blasphemy, not only in a religious sense, but in the sense of ruthless offence to

all that is most sacred in sentiment, human sympathy, and natural reverence, and to all that is just and reasonable, was fully characteristic of this latter-day school of sophistry.

**The Kaiser sets the example of self-praise.** The egregious self-esteem begotten in the Germans as a nation was displayed in a thousand ways, and with it their disposition to override and disdain everything that was counter to their desires. They were constantly told by their Kaiser, by their statesmen, by their savants, by their literati, by their clergy, by their newspapers, that they were incomparably superior to every other people. The Kaiser, setting the example of national self-praise, never tired of continuing it. In one of his speeches he said:

The great ideals, which have been lost, more or less, by other nations, have become for us Germans permanent possession. The German nation is now the only one, holding as it does, the foremost place, which is called upon to protect, to cultivate, and to promote these great ideals.

And again:

Our people will be the granite block whereon the good God may complete the civilization of the world. Then will be realized the word of the poet: That the world will one day be made whole through the efficacy of the German character.



Buelow, who, of all the Imperial chancellors, was the one who stood doubtless nearest to Wilhelm II. in personal favour, was the author of the following:

We Germans are the most learned people of the earth and at the same time the most capable in war. In all the sciences, as in all the arts, we have accomplished marvels. The greatest philosophers, the greatest writers, the greatest musicians are Germans. . . . The military and intellectual deeds of the Germans are unequalled.

**Germany considers herself the conscience of the world.** Treitschke taught that all history pointed to the ultimate supremacy of the Germans. Maeterlinck, the Belgian, did not venture too far when he said that "Germany regards herself as the conscience of the world." Professor Eucken, of the faculty of Jena, expressed the opinion that "to us more than to any other nation is entrusted the true structure of human existence."

In many public outgivings the Kaiser's blustering and bragging tone encouraged his subjects to the cultivation of that spirit which was destined to render, before the end of the year 1914, completely obnoxious to the rest of mankind. Yet the Germans, according to their own estimate, as phrased and dictated by the Kaiser, were the real "salt of the earth." At the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Prussian kingdom

he uttered this astounding sentence: "Nothing must henceforth be settled in this world without the intervention of Germany and the German Emperor." Treitschke had written: "To whom shall belong the sceptre of the universe? What nation will impose its wishes on the other decadent and feeble peoples? Will it not be the mission of Germany to insure the peace of the world? The future belongs to Germany, to whom Austria must attach herself if she wishes to survive." There was clamorous advocacy in the newspapers of the displacement of English by German as the commercial language of the world. English was denounced as "the bastard tongue of canting island pirates." It was declared that "the German tongue acts as a blessing upon all men. Coming direct from the hand of God, this blessing sinks into the heart like a precious balm and ennobles it." The "peace of the world," according to this system of world-policy (*welt-politik*), could be none other than that imposed by Germany—the "Germanic peace," in imitation of that which once could only exist in the ancient world by the will of the emperor and the Roman Senate.

**The Kaiser's self-exaltation.** All through his utterances and acts, the German Kaiser, whatever might be his contrary professions, manifested the belief that he was destined, if he chose, to be a world-conqueror. Of his fitness for this rôle he seems never to have had any doubt. It has been

aptly said that he possessed "an archaic idea of his powers and of his relations to the world"<sup>1</sup>—a "tenth-century ruler seated on a twentieth-century throne."<sup>2</sup> More than that, his temperament and his mentality apparently reflected remote Oriental ideals of the sacred absoluteness of the monarchical will, coupled with the theocratic notion of divine right. He constantly exhibited his idea, or at least his claim, that his people belonged to him, to do with as he liked. At a banquet in 1890, in celebration of the rise of the Brandenburg principality, where the Hohenzollerns made their first considerable advances in political power, he declared: "I deem that the country and the people that have passed into my care are a talent entrusted to me by God, which, in the Biblical sense, it is my duty to increase and to multiply. Those who oppose me in this work I shall crush." In another speech, worthy of a Persian despot, this same menacing pronouncement occurred in a more forceful form: "Only one is master in this country. That is I. Who opposes me I shall crush." To his soldiers, in the courtyard of Potsdam, in November, 1891, he said: "You are my soldiers. You have given yourselves to me, body and soul. If I were to ask you to fire on your own brothers or your parents, or to put them to the sword,—remember your oath!" And again, four years

<sup>1</sup> J. William White.

<sup>2</sup> G. R. Stirling Taylor, *The Psychology of the Great War*.

later, to naval recruits: "My men, you have come here to take the oath of fidelity. Just as I, your Emperor and sovereign, devote my every act, my every thought to the Empire, so are you bound to give up your whole life to me."

**Himself the slave of a system.** It may well be that, as a writer<sup>1</sup> already quoted has said:

A man who talks like that is not to be considered as an individual. . . . Such power as he possesses he must owe to some external force. He is indeed the expression of Prussian ideals. He is the final and chief product of Prussian autocracy and bureaucracy. . . . Wilhelm II. is all unconsciously the slave of a system: a part of a vast social machine which it amuses him to imagine that he controls. He is the one man in the world, above all others, who has utterly lost his individuality.

In other words, Wilhelm II. played a histrion's rôle, assigned to him by an entity stronger than his own, the fundamental spirit of the German nation; and he played it with an earnest ambition to surpass in gesture and word his strenuous ancestor, Frederick the Great, who, nevertheless, was a real master of the scene, while he himself was but a puppet, although fancying that he possessed the power of a Cyrus or a Darius. The power that he thought to be his was that of the dominant classes which had educated and now directed the

<sup>1</sup> G. R. S. Taylor.

energies of modern Germany. If this be the true view, the immeasurable fault of Wilhelm II. was, not so much that he exercised a positive force for evil in the affairs of the Empire (which force was in reality only a minor element in the formidable impulse of intellectual and protagonist Germany), but that, instead, he did not put forth an heroic veto of the unwise steps and the fatuous teachings which tended backwards towards the barbarisms of the Goths and the Vandals. The Kaiser and his subjects fed each other reciprocally with delusions as well as with illusions. But in the ultimate analysis, the native spirit of the German people must be held entirely responsible for the rupture of all amenities between themselves and the vast majority of mankind who still valued and pursued the true and sane civilization.

It had been thought by some foreign observers that moral degeneracy and physical enfeeblement among the Germans were inseparable. This, however, was only true in any marked degree of the denizens of the towns. Divorce, prostitution, bastardy, and vices which are too infamous to be named had largely increased, while throughout the country legitimate births had become less and less numerous. The proportion of epileptics and lunatics to the population was larger than ever before. The Kaiser and some of the political and military leaders lamented these ill-omened facts. The morbidity which they indicated may partly

account, indeed, for the distinct craze for world-domination which seemed to have seized upon all classes.

**Germany's unnatural hunger and the Pan-Germanic League.** Germany suffered from an unnatural hunger, and also from an incessant nervous dread lest her forced prosperity should suddenly collapse. The Pan-Germanic League, founded in 1891, the greater development of which began four years later, was at once a palliative to this disquietude and a promise of appeasement to the national hunger. Under the original cover of pacific professions, it urged the people onward to greater and ever greater increases of armament. Its systematic propaganda of the *Welt-politik* was perfectly organized and carefully matured. The famous manifesto, under the rubric of "A Universal Empire," issued in its early days, is in entire harmony with the later proclamations of Wilhelm II.

Progressive effort [it declared] will be carried on until our batteries can be unmasked without danger. Europe will then find herself confronted by a situation already prepared, even to the minutest details, and against which she will be powerless!

By way of giving to Europe her first lesson in abject submission, France and Holland were to be compelled to enter into a German commercial and customs union (*Zollverein*) securing to Ger-

many, regardless of their own interests, much greater benefits than to any other country. The alternative to this perfect submission would have been war, for which the occult moral preparation, aside from the more or less open military and naval preparation, was thus being made. The desire and ultimate purpose to annex Holland, "to possess the mouths of our great river, the Rhine," was expressed on many a public occasion in Germany, and in many ways. This annexation was even openly advocated, long before the Great War, as a necessary corollary to the seizure of Belgium.

**The Kaiser tries to captivate Frenchmen.** But the project of a *Zollverein*, embracing countries that were to pour their industrial and commercial tribute into the lap of Germania, did not prosper except in the imaginations of its originators. Wilhelm II. made flattering overtures to representative Frenchmen, endeavouring to exercise a personal charm over them, with the object of disarming the hate and distrust of their countrymen, and of smoothing the way to the accomplishment of the consuming ambition of the nation, without an actual resort to arms. Back of these efforts, however, was always the implied menace and its visible embodiment in the German army and navy. Two remarkable interviews between the Kaiser and a French statesman at Kiel in July, 1907, are recounted at length by Gabriel

Hanotaux, member of the French Academy and former Minister of Foreign Affairs. He does not say that he himself was the statesman in question, but that inference is obvious. The Kaiser declared to him that he was glad to meet with Frenchmen.<sup>2</sup> "Yes," he added, "and I should like to talk to the French nation." In further conversation he attributed the attitude of France with reference to Germany's claims regarding Morocco to the influence of his "dear uncle of England," Edward VII.

**Alliance but not restitution.** After this sneer, he met a discreet reproach which was addressed to him as to the offensive method and manner of German diplomacy with the nervous and impatient response:

All those are small matters. I will attend to them. But the real question is different. I will speak very plainly. There should be an alliance between the two countries. Then, each supporting the other, they would be masters of the world! Beware! It is a critical hour. I have foreseen and already I have denounced the Yellow Peril. . . . But there are two other dangers: one from Asia; the other from America. If we in Europe continue to tear at each other's throats, we shall be taken unawares. There is but one way out, and that is the alliance.

<sup>2</sup> The Kaiser at certain moments had always, as the Infanta Eulalia of Spain remarks in some amusing reminiscences published in 1914 and 1915, professed a great fondness for the French *esprit*. "I am very French myself," he would frequently say.



At the second interview the French statesman put to the Emperor this most significant question: "Since frankness is permitted me, may I ask: Has your Majesty really dreamt of forming an alliance with a country that is still dismembered?" This was, of course, an undisguised allusion to Alsace and Lorraine. "The Emperor's look," says Hanotaux, "became as hard as steel." He gazed fixedly at the French statesman, and said: "And you, sir—Have you really dreamt that I could in the slightest degree undo what is already an accomplished fact?" And, turning his eyes in another direction, he added: "I see that we do not understand each other."

To the Duc de Noailles, French Ambassador at Berlin, the Kaiser avowed that he would never himself have deprived France of Alsace-Lorraine. "Instead," he said, "I would have doubled the French indemnity."

Wilhelm, as a matter of fact, could not have restored the lost territory, even if he would. He was fast held in the grip of the ruling elements of his people, to whose sinister aberration he had himself contributed, more intoxicated, as he was, with the showy rôles which he loved to assume than thoughtful of the world-tragedy in which they might end.

**Character of the Kronprinz.** The pan-Germanic movement outgrew in exaggeration the Emperor's own histrionic conception of it, and,

instead of himself, his eldest son, Kronprinz Wilhelm, narrow of intellect, meanly vicious and cruel, less intelligent, less accomplished, but more enterprising, more downright, more bellicose, than his father, became its real although unavowed head. The Kaiser found his own popularity less evident, while that of the Kronprinz continually increased. The test of this fact occurred in numerous clashes of will, after one of which the Kaiser ordered the Prince to remain indefinitely with his regiment at Königsberg, whereas, of all things, he liked the social gaiety and the lenient morality of the Imperial capital. It was Treitschke who had remarked long before this that "no Hohenzollern has ever yet been of the same mind as his son." It was the common belief among his own people that the Kronprinz was athirst for war. His dissolute and shameless habits were but too well known, and many qualified observers were of the opinion that if he succeeded to the throne he would be the worst possible ruler that Imperial Germany could have.

The agrarian and conservative interests were the backbone of the pan-Germanic movement. It demanded the practical militarization of the whole country. The people of the non-Prussian states were aroused in opposition to the project, and Bavaria showed a disposition to lead them, in the event of an open rupture between them and the states of the North. It was Ludwig of Bavaria

who had once rebuked the Kaiser because of an over-presumptuous passage in one of his speeches, by declaring to his face that the heads of the confederated monarchies were not his vassals, but his allies, and that his higher rank consisted only in the fact that he was "first among equals."

## CHAPTER VI

### GERMANY'S MILITARY BURDEN REACHES THE EXTREME LIMIT THAT THE PEOPLE CAN BEAR

Outward Change in the Kaiser's Attitude—His Total Surrender to the Influence of the War Party—France the Primary Object of German Animosity—Organizing a Movement of Popular Hate—Secret Confederates Abroad to be Amply Rewarded—Invasion of Belgium and Holland Contemplated—Further Annexations in View—Anticipatory Count of the Enormous Gains of Successful Aggression—Umbrageous Prejudices of the Masses Systematically Cultivated—Reversion to Political Mediævalism—Trade and Military Power Yoked together—Plutocratic Support of the Dynasty—Confession of Barbarous Motives and Purposes.

**A**FTER the vote of the extraordinary war-tax in 1913, which was in fact a measure of confiscation in time of peace, there were many indications that the monstrous military machine had reached the utmost proportions to which it could safely be developed. This was the Kaiser's personal measure, a test of the absolute power of the Empire. It provoked important protests from the federated states. Together with the immense increase of effectives in the

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standing army, it was without precedent in the history of national sacrifices. There was but one interpretation to be put upon it. It meant war.

Certain it was that Germany could only continue her artificial prosperity by further exaggeration of her industries and wider extension of her commerce. She stood in sore need of foreign capital and was in the clutches of a grave economic crisis. Her most important economic leaders foresaw that she must face either war or ruin. Her loud and vulgar intrusion was everywhere viewed with distaste. Her colonies were a burdensome disappointment. Her markets, after an unnatural growth, were already shrinking. England and France, the great reservoirs of lendable wealth, no longer supplied her financial needs with a free hand. She had demonstrated too plainly her disloyalty in competition, and her hope of monopolizing many commercial interests that hitherto had been pre-eminently theirs.

**Continued peace would probably have meant decentralization.** With a continuance of peace, the military service would certainly have fallen into a grave degree of unpopularity, the worrisome weight of taxation would have been more and more resented, and the latent sentiment in favour of decentralizing the Empire and giving back to the larger constituent states much of their original authority, taken from them in 1871, would gradually have been stimulated until it became irre-

sistible, or else productive of civil war. The commercial and industrial leaders throughout the Empire wanted to see the policy of excessive armaments abandoned and to make friends with Britain and Russia, and with France, as well, if possible. Parliament itself was greatly fatigued with the never-ending exactions of militarism. A counterpoise was needed in the Empire. The old antipathy between the South Germans and the North Germans had never been allayed. It was temperamental and profound. Separatism and socialism were both gnawing at the vitals of the absolutist régime. The day of fatal perplexity for the monarch who had sought so long to convince the world of his universal competency had at last arrived. He had approached this supreme climax partly of his free will, but partly also because forced to it.<sup>1</sup> It may be that he and some other great personages of the Empire were overwhelmed by the very cataclysm that they had themselves helped to create. Nothing short of war could now save the prestige of the autocracy and the military caste.

**Outward change in the Kaiser's attitude.** For those who had access to his presence, the reluctant conviction on the part of Wilhelm II. that he was at last to be called upon to make good the *fanfa-*

<sup>1</sup> "His [the Kaiser's] leadership lacked firmness. He had all the qualities except those which are necessary in a sovereign."

—CHARLES BONNEFON.

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*ronnade* of the previous twenty-six years of his reign was plainly marked. A change took place in his habitual conversation and pose. The Infanta Eulalia of Spain, as well as observers of lesser rank or of no rank at all, had publicly noted the indiscreet disclosures of his inner self. Journalists and parvenu seekers after notoriety profited time and again by these disclosures in ways which scandalized even the ultra-docile imperial Parliament, until his chief minister, Buelow, found himself obliged to demand from his Majesty assurances that in future he would keep his tongue under closer guard.<sup>1</sup> By this course Buelow brought about his own disfavour and his fall. The influential politicians blamed him for not having curbed the Kaiser's loquacity, and the Kaiser resented the reproof that he had received from his own "servant," otherwise his chief minister.

**Under the influence of the military clan.** In November, 1913, the Kaiser, in the presence of his Chief of Staff, General von Moltke, son of the great strategist, made some evidently premeditated statements to the King of the Belgians, Albert I. He made it very clear that he regarded

<sup>1</sup> Allusion is here particularly made to an interview with the Kaiser, published in the London *Telegraph* towards the end of the year 1908. It contained outspoken declarations of the sentiments of himself and his people towards Great Britain and other nations.

war between Germany and France as inevitable, and that, in his opinion, it must be carried on by the former with the most relentless rigour. He no longer made any profession, as in the past, of pacific sentiments. He appeared nervous, irritable, and exalted in spirit. He seemed to have wholly surrendered himself to the influence of the military clan. It was obviously a part of his aim to impress the King of the Belgians with a certainty of German triumph and to dispose him in advance against any effort at resistance, should Germany deem it necessary to cross his territory in attacking France.

Knowledge of this interview coming to the French Ambassador in Berlin caused him to warn his government of the precariousness of the Franco-German situation; and he borrowed a phrase from the Kaiser's own warlike repertory (which, however, had previously been borrowed from a leader of far greater renown). "I would say," he wrote, "that it is well to take account of this new fact—that the Emperor has now accustomed himself to an order of ideas which before were repugnant to him, and that we should 'keep our powder dry.'"

Well had it been for France if those who were responsible for her guidance had seriously acted upon the spirit of this advice!

**German resentment of the new French spirit.**  
The revival of the military spirit in France, in 1912



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and 1913, as a new phase of a patriotic awakening, had surprised the German politicians, aristocracy, and press, and the increase of the French military strength and efficiency aroused in them even a remarkably presumptuous, though naïve, exhibition of anger. Lieutenant-Colonel Serret, military attaché at Berlin, reported to the Minister of War at Paris that the military projects of his government were regarded as "extraordinary and unjustified." At a social gathering a moderate member of the Reichstag declared that the lengthening to three years of the period of military service in France was "a provocation," adding with an arrogance which was entirely Prussian: "We will not permit it." Other eminent Germans maintained that, with only forty millions of inhabitants, France had no right to rival Germany in the military sense, with her sixty millions and more. Coincident of this sentiment was the spite of the Germans of all classes over the victory of French diplomacy, supported by that of Britain, in 1911, in the affair of Morocco, and a vaguely defined fear of the "new France," unknown before the Agadir episode, and which was now suspected of a bellicose impulse as against Germany. The impotency of the French Republic, the political demoralization of its citizens, and the inefficiency of its army had been a settled dogma of German public opinion. The renewed moral unity of France, her resolution to stand by her rights to

the uttermost, the fact that she was "insolent" enough to have no fear of a war in defence of her honour and her liberty, were the cause of grave disquietude and of profound ill-humour at Berlin.<sup>\*</sup> German pride was greatly irritated and the hatred of the nation which was victorious in 1870 towards the one which had been wronged in the rapacious terms of the peace of Frankfort was much intensified. In the previous year the Germans had been filled with an overweening confidence in their prestige and in the fear which they inspired, and had deemed that their political and commercial conquest of the world was a foregone conclusion.

**France the primary object of German animosity.** These ideas had not disappeared. The economic need of expansion was constantly becoming more urgent. The vast and final effort of the Empire in view of the probable near approach of war to put the land armament beyond the possibility of equal rivalry was not suddenly resolved upon, but was the culmination of a long-matured design. The general situation of Europe and the so-called Slavic peril were cited by the government to produce the impression that the Fatherland was menaced and so to justify those extraordinary measures. Public opinion, however, was not greatly moved by either. France was the primary object of German animosity, although for military

<sup>\*</sup> Secret report to the French Foreign Office, 30th of July, 1913.

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and political reasons it was possible that she would not be the first to feel the actual impingement of Germany's aggressive force.

The conference of Algeciras had dissipated all doubts as to the existence of the formal understanding between France, Russia, and Britain. A confidential memorandum on the military and diplomatic prospect prepared in March, 1913, for the Kaiser's Government and obtained in duplicate by the French Government outlined the preparations that were needed to offset the probable sending of British forces, both land and naval against Germany; it dwelt also upon the improvement of the French armament and of the morale of the French nation; and upon the lessened value of Austria-Hungary as a military collaborator, in view of the increased power of the Balkan states since their successful conflict with Turkey. Here is the most characteristic passage in the report:

Neither the ridiculous bawling of the French chauvinists, nor the grinding of teeth of the English, nor the wild gesticulations of the Slavs will divert us from our aim, which is to fortify and to extend the German power throughout the whole world.

**Organizing a movement of popular rage.** Another passage revealed the cunning craft of the organizers of the new movement of popular

rage against the opponents of German universal dominion:

The people must be imbued with the idea that our armaments are only a response to the armaments and the policy of the French. *Matters must be conducted in such a manner that, under the burdensome effect of powerful armaments, of great sacrifices, and of an anxious political situation, the loosing of restraint shall be regarded as a deliverance, because afterwards there will come decades of peace and prosperity, as after [the war of] 1870.* War must be prepared for in a financial sense. . . . Distrust must not be aroused on the part of our financiers.

**Secret confederates to be amply rewarded.** The importance of disloyal and perfidious methods as directed against the nations to be attacked was much emphasized:

Troubles must be stirred up in North Africa and in Russia. . . . It is absolutely necessary that we place ourselves in relationship, by well-chosen agents, with people of influence in Egypt, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco, to prepare measures which will be necessary in case of a European war. Of course in that event these secret allies will be openly recognized; and the retention at the conclusion of peace of advantages which they will have conquered will be assured to them. . . . Uprisings provoked in time of war by political agents require to be carefully prepared, and by material means.<sup>1</sup> They should burst forth simul-

<sup>1</sup> That is by the use of money.

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taneously with the destruction of means of communication<sup>1</sup>; they should have directing heads to be found among influential religious and political leaders. . . . The small states [of Europe] must either be forced to join us or be vanquished. *Under certain conditions their armies or their fortified places may be rapidly conquered or neutralized, which would very probably be the case with Belgium and Holland.* . . . There the question will be vital for us, and the end towards which we must tend from the very first is to take the offensive with greatly superior numbers. For that purpose it will be necessary to concentrate a great army, followed by strong bodies of territorial troops, which will determine the armies of the smaller states to cast in their lot with us, or at least to remain inactive on the theatre of war, or else will crush them in case of armed resistance. *If these states could be induced to organize their systems of fortification in such a manner that they would constitute an effective protection for our flank, the projected invasion could be dispensed with.*

**Further annexations in view.** The intention of making further annexations of French and other territory was thus set forth:

If the foe attacks us, or if we aim to conquer him, we will do as did our brothers a century ago: with his keen talons the incensed eagle will seize the foe, and will render him powerless. And then we will remem-

<sup>1</sup> There was an attempt to follow this recommendation by the blowing up of a railway bridge in Canada, close to the American border.

ber that certain provinces of the old German Empire, the county of Burgundy and a fine part of Lorraine, are still in the hands of the Franks; that millions of our German brothers in the Baltic provinces are groaning under the Slavic yoke. It is a national question: that of restoring to Germany what was formerly hers.

It is to be remarked that this memorandum makes no suggestion that Germany restore to her neighbours the territories, such as Schleswig-Holstein, Posen, and West and East Prussia, which she took from them long after Lorraine and Burgundy<sup>1</sup> had ceased to belong to the loose political agglomeration styled the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.

**Ineffective opposition to war.** There were in Germany, prior to the official propaganda of war, forces favourable to peace; but unfortunately they were for the most part inorganic and without effective leadership. To a certain extent the sound opinion was held that it would be a great calamity for Germany; that pride of caste, the Prussian domination, and the enrichment of the arms-making interests would be further stimu-

<sup>1</sup> Practically an independent state from 1363 to 1477, when it was incorporated with France. Lorraine belonged to France under Louis IX., and Alsace, after conquest, was confirmed to Louis XIV., by the Treaty of Westphalia, in 1648. West and East Prussia, as well as Posen and Galicia, were both formerly included for the most part in the kingdom of Poland.

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lated by it; but that England would reap the greatest profit from it. Among those who at that time were opposed to the war were millions of artisans and peasants; such of the nobility as were free from imperative military connections and were engaged in large industrial enterprises, some of them possessing considerable influence at the imperial court; a great many minor manufacturers, merchants, and financiers, to whom a war, although victorious, would bring ruin, because their business thrived largely upon credit, and above all, upon foreign capital; the seven million non-German inhabitants of the annexed regions of Poland, Alsace-Lorraine, and Schleswig and Holstein; and the governments and ruling classes of the southern states of the Empire, Saxony, Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden, who feared the loss of the great economic advantages that were due to federation, if the war should prove disastrous, or the further "prussianization" of the country, the lessening of their separate rights, and the possible ultimate loss of their autonomy, if it should be successful, thus augmenting the prestige and the pretensions of the central government. The socialists in the Reichstag were ostensibly against war; but the Reichstag was chiefly a negative force. It had no voice in determining whether there should be war or not. That question was as completely in the hands of the Kaiser as if he were a Pharaoh. Yet even if the pacific sentiment

within the Empire could have enlisted attention, its force was already emasculated by the universal doubt that anything less terrible than war would clarify the international situation and, above all, would allay the uneasiness and the economic constraint of the people. There was also an obscure, though profound, feeling that Germany could never be free from danger if France should regain her former relative strength. History was appealed to in support of this thesis.

**Traditional hatred of republican France.** Another force that reacted against the tentative arguments for peace was a kind of mystical hatred of revolutionary France, a hatred which was in part reminiscent of the tremendous shock produced beyond the Rhine when the armies of Kellerman, and Dumouriez defeated the Prussian champions of the Bourbon-Capetian monarchy, at Valmy, in 1792. The landed nobility (which term is virtually synonymous with the designation "military caste") was largely impelled towards war by the need of maintaining their dominant position and of escaping a tax upon successions which it was the intention of the majority in the Reichstag to impose upon them and which would have constituted a grave infringement upon their ancient exemptions. The representation of the nobility in the Reichstag had diminished from 162 members out of 397 in 1878, to 57, of whom 7 were socialists, in 1912. The upper middle class



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were as greatly displeased as were the nobility at the growth of democratic opinion in the mass of the electors. The representation of this class had fallen from 125 members in 1878 to 45 in 1912, while that of the social-democrats had risen in five years from 50 to 110. The upper middle class detested France as the supposed hotbed in which were propagated all social and economic disturbances. The great manufacturers of war material and war utensils; the greedy commercial class which demanded more numerous and more exclusive markets, and the contractors and financiers who founded dreams of Aladdin-like gains upon the pressing necessities of war and the expected taking of a vast money-indemnity from the beaten nations; functionaries of every sort and others who religiously guarded the Bismarckian tradition of brutal political action; the universities, which developed the ideology of war; economists who sought to demonstrate that colonial and commercial supremacy was necessary to the continued life of the German nation; sociologists who declared that armed peace was too crushing a burden to be borne indefinitely, that it arrested the betterment of the masses and stimulated their crowding forward towards radical socialism; historians, politicians, publicists, and ministers of religion, vaunting the unequalled excellence of German *Kultur* and desirous of imposing it upon the world—all these were in favour of war. There

was one other class, the most dangerous, that which cherished for various reasons a personal rancour and a petty resentment against France. Its leaders were largely diplomatists. Many of them had had more or less to do with the Franco-German negotiations over the Moroccan and other questions. They thought that the French diplomatists had surpassed them in clever astuteness was intolerable. They wanted revenge for themselves and for their country. Meanwhile they accused the French of the same desire.

**Social-democrats yield to the moral epidemic.** Even the freest, strongest, most truculent of the political parties in Germany, the social-democrats, professing to be inimical to imperialism and all manner of arbitrary power, yielded to the general moral epidemic. They had virtually abandoned the pursuit of supposed altruistic ideals and now confined themselves to the protection and furtherance of the economic interests of the organized workers. They furnished a convincing example of the ingrained tenacity of the old German habit of servility<sup>1</sup> to those in high place. Once in recent years the socialists had marched 100,000 strong towards the Emperor's palace in Berlin and had sworn to conquer their political and economic liberty or to perish. A relatively small body

<sup>1</sup> "Those times of . . . economic and political servility shall not return. We will never again, to quote Friedrich List, become the mere servants of mankind."—PRINCE VON BUELOW.

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of police dispersed them as if they were so many sheep. The true power of the socialists lay in the fact that they could obtain concessions from the other classes through fear of their numbers, now surpassing those of any other section of the electorate. Their political action as a party was really, therefore, a kind of blackmail. They got many official posts and wanted more. The government was constantly in dread of their more rapid increase and it was glad that war offered the opportunity to thrust their tenacious partisan activities into the background and to shackle their energies by compelling them to do their part against the enemies of the Empire. Their pretensions to internationalism, to fraternal sentiments towards socialists of other lands, to devotion to justice and peace, irrespective of nationality, their purpose, previously declared, to "rebel against war," failed instantly at the test. They supported the Kaiser when war was decreed with apparently as much zest as any of their fellow-citizens, and they gave themselves up to military service quite as readily.

**Denunciation of the Kaiser's war.** To this attitude of absolute acquiescence, however, there were some exceptions. Certain socialists, among whom was Karl Liebknecht, member of the Reichstag, gave proof of a noble sincerity and of intrepid devotion to the broad principles of civilization. He refused in the Reichstag to

vote for the war credits demanded by the Imperial Government. The president of the Reichstag forbade the reading of Liebknecht's written protest against the war and no German journalist ventured to print it. It was published in Switzerland.

This war [said Liebknecht], which none of the peoples which are involved in it have desired, has not occurred for the good of the German people or any other people. It is an imperialistic war, a war to dominate politically countries wherein industrial and banking capital may be put at work. From the point of view of the competition in armaments, it is an anticipative war, provoked, in mutuality of interest, and in the obscurity of semi-absolutism and diplomatic secrecy, by the German and Austrian war parties. Germany, the accomplice of Tsarism, the country until now of political reaction, has no title to the assumption of the rôle of the liberator of nations. . . . It is not a war for the defence of Germany. The historical character of Germany as well as the sequence of events forbids us to place our confidence in the declaration of a capitalistic government that it asks for money for the national defence. . . . My protest is against the war; against those who are responsible for it, those who direct it; against the capitalistic ends which it pursues; against plans of annexation; against the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxemburg; against military dictatorship, against the complete ignoring of social and political duties of which the government and the

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dominant classes have again rendered themselves guilty.

A small group of socialists, headed by Karl Bernstein, also protested against the

iniquitous war, into which the German nation, impelled by the Kaiser and his military entourage, deluded by perjured statesmen in the Reichstag and by false statements disseminated throughout the Empire, has precipitated itself blindfold, against forces which, sustained by indisputable moral considerations, give no evidence whatever of weakness. . . .

This group appealed to the workers of Germany against the atrocities in Flanders, Brabant, Alsace, and Lorraine, "whereby," it declared, "the Kaiser has covered the nation with ineffaceable shame—the mutilation and butchery of innocent victims, defenceless old men, women, children, and suckling babes"—and against "a war-ransom which consists of the sacrifice of the precious lives of workers, of wage-earners, in an infernal and barbarous campaign by sea and land."

**Popular prejudices systematically wrought up.** Beginning in the latter part of 1912, the Imperial authorities had sought incessantly to excite the patriotic prejudices of the people. The Kaiser revived on every occasion memories of the former struggles of the northern states against the foreigner, especially the war against Napoleonic rule

in 1813, and with the indefatigable aid of the German press strove to establish an analogy between the condition of the nation at that epoch and in the present, from the point of view of economic constraint and extraneous oppression. It was projected as a capital means of inflaming popular prejudice and the national pride to celebrate in 1914 the centenary of the first overthrow of Napoleon and the entry at Paris of the armies of the anti-French coalition.

**Covetousness as a motive of foreign policy.** Like a man who wilfully creates in himself a vicious habit of thought, which grows to be a monomania whereof he is the mechanical slave, the German people was henceforth no longer the master of its own desires, of its emotions. The new philosophy of scientific barbarism had drawn to itself the students, the writers, the soldiers, the bureaucrats, the leaders in every department of life. As Mommsen had feared, true wisdom even in his time had deserted the leaders of thought. Covetousness of what belonged to other nations, hatred of those nations because it belonged to them, and because sacrifices might be necessary in order to wrest it from them, appeared solely to actuate the external policy of the government and to be the dominant state of mind of the people. The masses could never have been blinded, as they were, to the enormity of the attitude of their leaders, except by the device of fostering in them a false pride

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and a naïve sense of self-sufficiency characteristic of their entire mental and moral dependence upon those in superior place. They were really at the mercy of these latter. Of political common-sense they had but little. For two hundred years they had had no spokesman for civil liberty.<sup>1</sup> Untiringly it had been dinned into their brains that the Germans were better in all things than any one else; that it was right that there should be one law for them and another for all the rest of the world, and that it was their duty to establish everywhere the German system of neo-epicurean civilization, broadly known under the generic name of *Kultur*.

**Corrupted pride and over-cultivated egoism.** There can be no more dangerous method of evil instruction than that which is supported by an inordinate or corrupted pride, which is the concomitant of a carefully cultivated egoism. Real culture, the knowledge and love of the beautiful and good, justice and a reasonable tolerance, respect for the rights of others and a loyal consideration of the weak and dependent seemed, indeed, as related to the world at large, to have receded from the German plan of life in the same degree that the Teutonic *Kultur*, which simply meant the knowledge and skill which conduce to material efficiency and power, had gained possession of it. A writer<sup>2</sup> has well said that Treitschke

<sup>1</sup> *Deutschland über Alles*, John Jay Chapman.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times History of the War*, London, part ii.

and his school of thought "threw a glamour over these debasing tendencies" and gave them a soul, which was the "quintessence of the worst and most dangerous qualities of victorious Germany."

**Material advance and moral recession.** Nietzsche had said that Germany reached her intellectual apogee at the time when, in the political sense, she was feeblest and most divided. It was then that she produced such men as Klopstock, Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, and Leibnitz. In the very ratio of her material advance she lapsed back towards her primary condition of crudity, cultivating a disdain of the spiritual forces and exalting the physical and mechanical. Hence she surrendered herself to the apotheosis of the armed chief, of the chief in "shining armour," the kingly warrior with "the mailed fist," reminiscent of the ancient Teutonic legends, which still, in spite of the literary refinements of the modern versions, are essentially the idealization of brutal passion and valorous bloodthirstiness. Heinrich Heine, who found in France, as he avowed, the gentleness of spirit which was unexistent in his native Germany,<sup>1</sup> wrote that Christianity itself could not destroy "the brutal German joy of battle" and that, in the end, Thor, the *alte deutsche Gott*, would "upspring again with his mighty hammer

<sup>1</sup> It was Heine (born under the Prussian monarchy) who wrote: "The Prussians? . . . Nature made them stupid; science has rendered them wicked."



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and shatter the Gothic cathedrals into atoms." In this fatal prophecy he proved himself the real Jeremiah of the German nation.

**Reversion to political mediævalism.** Modern Germany set up mediæval ideas against what certain writers have too loosely termed "the Teutonic idea of freedom," the origin of which was due only to a few tribes, such as the Angles, the Jutes, and the north-western Saxons, who carried it with them upon leaving the cradle of their race. In Germany itself this idea had long been practically dead, while in other nations it was flourishing with ever-increasing vigour. The Germans of the twentieth century, or at least the thoroughly "prussianized" Germans, showed a disposition, in effect if not literally, to deify their "All-Highest War-Lord." He for his part, aiming to appropriate in the title of kaiser all the mighty significance which attaches to that of Cæsar, whereof it is the barbaric form, lent himself readily to a semi-worship of his person, even tacitly inviting it, like those decadent and vicious emperors of Rome, in the age of her decline, who had no really glorious record of their own, to give to it a vivid colour of plausibility.

**Bases of the Kaiser's popularity.** The Kaiser was in fact the personification of the prevailing Prussian politico-social philosophy, which was an effort to harmonize mediæval conceptions of authority with scientific expertness and mechanical

organization.<sup>1</sup> That the industrial and commercial activity of the German people was increased a hundredfold under Wilhelm II.; that he created the most formidable war-machine that the world had seen or imagined; that he was rapidly preparing to defy Great Britain on the high seas; that he confidently hoped that he or his successors would take from her the nautical supremacy; that his *welt-politik* meant world dominion and limitless conquest, either by arms or by blackmailing diplomacy or both<sup>2</sup>; that no project of aggrandizement was too audacious or too lawless for him to entertain, provided that its execution appeared feasible and probable; that he professed ever to stand in most intimate relationship with the *alte deutsche Gott*, whose special favour and championship he claimed for himself and his people, and who would thus sanctify the placing of might before right, of international falsehood and rapacity before international honour and neighbourliness<sup>3</sup>; that he untiringly propagated the legend

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Mann, writing in the *Neue Rundschau*, November, 1914: "Kultur is an organizing of mankind in a spiritual sense that is not exclusive of 'bloody savagery.' It 'sublimates the demoniac.' It is above morals, reason, science."

<sup>2</sup> *Die Zukunft* (Maximilian Harden), September, 1901: "After all, it is visibly the meaning of history that the white race, *under the leadership of the Germans*, shall arrive at the real and ultimate domination of the world."

<sup>3</sup> Professor Ostwald, in an authorized interview, published in the *Dagen* of Stockholm, November, 1914: "The present situation necessarily evokes ancestral instincts. . . . I should say,

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of his own prodigious cleverness and versatility; that in public he ever sought to look and to act the martial demi-god, the dispenser of peace and war, and that the German subject race was ever ready to lick the master hand that beat it—these were some of the chief bases during a great part of his reign of his very remarkable popularity. It mattered nothing to the Kaiser or to the sycophantic and time-serving advisers composing his *camerilla* (the nineteenth-century substitute for the famous "smoking college" of the uncouth Friedrich Wilhelm I.) that he was likened by French satirists to Picrochole, king of the tiny country of Lerné, who picked quarrels with his royal neighbours upon such pretexts as the pillaging of a "field of doughnuts" or the robbery of a hen-roost; who also dreamed, as Wilhelm seems to have done, of being crowned at Constantinople and Trebizond as Emperor of the East, and who, being seduced by his counsellors, built upon this notion great projects of slaughter, pillage, and devastation. The Kaiser's fatuity was proof

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however, that God the Father is reserved among us for the personal use of the Emperor. There was a single recent mention of him in a report of the Grand General Staff, but you may note that he has not reappeared since." What faith the free-thinkers in Germany had in the personal claim of their Kaiser upon the *alle deutsche Gott* may be inferred from this passage in an article by Maximilian Harden: "It is not true that God denies the victory to the impious. Frederick the Great was frankly atheist; religion, he said, was a machine used in all ages to subjugate men; and he swore that God is always on the side of the strongest battalions."

against Rabelaisian ridicule. His power, though an absurd anomaly in the twentieth century, was too palpable a fact. In the specific exercise of military absolutism he aped the astute Prussian monarch of a century and a half before his time, but in the utilization of his power he went even further.

**Trade and military power yoked together.** The army was always the prized toy of the Hohenzollerns. Prussia, according to its own historical critic, Professor Delbrück, was always a "war-state." Of the elder Hohenzollerns, the army served, when tortuous diplomacy had grown too tedious, as a ready instrument for the acquisition of wider territories, whence more and more soldiers could be drawn to swell its ranks and ever increasing revenues to pay for its maintenance. Until the Prussian "war of liberation" in 1813, enforced soldiering was not favoured by Germans in general, although in the eighteenth century the mercenary corps of the principalities were well paid, being often let out at pecuniary profit to other governments, as in the case of the Hessians, who gained so infamous a repute when used against the American revolutionists.<sup>2</sup>

**Plutocratic support of the dynasty.** It was only

<sup>2</sup> The barbarous deeds of the Hessian troops of George III. in America, though less general, were of very much the same nature as those committed by the Prussians, Bavarians, and Saxons in Belgium and France in the early months of the Great War.

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patriotic enthusiasm over the prospect of a united and progressive Fatherland which made compulsory military service more tolerable after Wilhelm I., Bismarck, and Moltke had begun in 1864 their open policy of aggression for the extension of the Prussian hegemony. Wilhelm II., however, made the industrial and commercial future of the nation, as well as its political aspirations, a justification of exaggerated armaments on land and sea. He condescended to abandon momentarily the airs of the demi-god to gain a gratitude or an affection that might be useful to him in this, his most absorbing work. He reckoned most shrewdly upon personal vanity and selfish interest. While serving his own general purpose he amused himself with parvenu tuft-hunters, many of them from foreign lands,<sup>1</sup> whose public he hoped to prepossess in his favour. But those among his own subjects who had command of millions of money were the more honoured of his friends. A plutocracy that rivalled in actual power the ancient Prussian nobility was fast growing up. The exaltation of wealth as a social and political force was an essential phase of German materialism. "Capitalism," according to Colwer, a German publicist, "must first, with the means and weapons at its disposal, bring the world into subjection." Those means and weapons were the imperial army and its modern engines of death. Trade and the

<sup>1</sup> From the United States of America especially.

machinery of war were harnessed together to carry out the Germanic scheme of universal expansion. Never before had two vast artificial organisms been placed in such perfect co-operative accord. Diplomacy, officialdom, and education, in all its forms, whether in the schools or elsewhere, were merely its auxiliaries. This unique concentration of the thought and energies of a great people upon a purpose whose root was pride and covetousness debased inevitably the standards of moral and intellectual life.

**Insincere repudiation of Treitschke and his apostles.** Such sane phases of German patriotism as still existed after so long a period of devotion to mistaken ideals were virtually submerged in the poisoned sea of public prejudice and passion. Nevertheless, so profoundly had the Teutonic version of Machiavellism outraged the good sense and the normal sympathies of mankind that many of the Intellectuals of Germany were forced against their inclination into a feigned attitude of apology. They strove to give a moral varnish to scientific barbarism. Certain of them affected to repudiate Treitschke and all his active apostles, asserting that they exercised no authority whatever over German thought. The chief object of the denial was to mitigate in the great neutral countries—more especially in the United States of America—the horror and repugnance which had already been manifested at the confessed lack of humanity and of political

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morality of the Germans. The one irrefutable answer to these apologists was that the course of the German nation was in complete accord with what Frederick the Great,<sup>1</sup> Bismarck,<sup>2</sup> Clausewitz,<sup>3</sup> Haeckel,<sup>4</sup> Moltke,<sup>5</sup> Treitschke, Bernhardi, and Wilhelm II. himself had taught.

**Cause of Germany's bad reputation.** The apologists themselves traced the commencement of the bad reputation into which Germany had fallen to the period preceding the Franco-Prussian War. It had been found, according to the confession of no less a person than Prince von Buelow, that "all the other nations had looked with distrust and aversion upon the new Germany." Considering the manner in which Bismarck had schemed to bring about that war, as well as the two previous ones in which Germany was the criminal aggressor, and the rapacious spoliation which marked its close, this attitude was not in the least wonderful. The Prussian statesmen had deliberately brought Germany into a position of moral antagonism to every other nation, and to a point where every

<sup>1</sup> "I begin by taking; I find learned men later to prove my good right." "If there is something to be gained by being honest, we will be honest; but if we must cheat, let us be rascals."—FREDERICK II. of Prussia.

<sup>2</sup> "Force creates right; war is a natural law."—PRINCE BISMARCK.

<sup>3</sup> "All idea of philanthropy in war is a pernicious error."—CLAUSEWITZ.

<sup>4</sup> "Force takes priority of right."—HAECKEL.

<sup>5</sup> "War is holy; it was instituted by God."—MOLTKE.

other contiguous nation that felt itself sufficiently strong might be expected to turn against her.<sup>1</sup> After the accession of Wilhelm II. events further justified this distrust and aversion. During more than twenty years the singular spectacle was witnessed of one part of the more intellectual classes of Germany, led by the apostles of scientific barbarism, continuing to intensify the causes of enmity against her, while another conspicuous portion sought to undo, or at least to palliate, the legitimate consequences of this course.

**Apologists for the Prussian dogmas of policy and war.** Falsehood, subterfuge, and sophistry were the stock in trade of the majority of the apologists. If they had but consented to study attentively the estimates of their kind formed by some of the truly great Germans of the past, they might, perhaps, have felt some shame and have changed the nature of their plea. Thus Goethe said to Eckermann: "I have often felt a deep sorrow when I have thought of this German nation which is so estimable in each individual and so pitiful as a whole." And Schopenhauer in his *Memorabilien*: "In prevision of my death I make this confession, that I despise the German nation because of its infinite stupidity and that I blush to belong to it." Who, of such eminence, ever

<sup>1</sup>"I have tried many times to discover in the Germans some sort of sympathy for other nations; never have I succeeded."—PÈRE DIDON.



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wrote in similar vein of his native England, or France, or Italy, or America?

The apologists for scientific barbarism did not write or speak so much as individuals as in their character of representatives of the ruling thought of their country. As the fatal moment drew near, their activity increased, and many well-meaning critics in various parts of the world were deceived by them. Von Buelow impudently wrote in a volume published shortly before the Great War that rarely in her history had Germany been aggressive, whereas the most notorious fact of all modern times is that Prussia owed her very existence to war, and in a greater degree her expansion. A French writer had put the truth most aptly by saying that war was her real national industry.

Later, in the heat and fury of hatred, fanned by actual conflict, the intellectual apologists became apparently less hypocritical and more fanatical. Certain of them may even have believed the egregious falsehoods that they vainly presented to the world as logical facts. But, if so, it was in the face of overwhelming evidence of an import exactly the opposite.

**The characteristic German mania.** If the criminal instinct is a germ of madness, then a people quite as well as an individual may readily succumb to it. Only complete civilization, perhaps, can give immunity from this peril. In all its history the main body of the Germanic race has

continually shown the homicidal, incendiary, and pillaging mania. Mixture of its blood with that of Slavic, Keltic, and other tribes did not change the fundamental characteristic. Only the offshoots of northern Teutons, in a different environment, and by further ethnic blendings, acquired a better temperamental balance. The geographical situation of Germany, so difficult to defend, and the fact that she was walled in, as it were, by other human masses, gave to her people an uneasy sense of confinement and at the same time of insecurity most unfortunate in its influence upon a nature that is in any degree morbid. Severity of control and a perpetual military organization were deemed by all their rulers to be necessary in order to keep her people well in hand.

As long as history has known the Germans they have sought to overstep the bounds of their territorial home and to overrun the world, at the cost of indescribable suffering and untold loss to the dwellers in other lands. In the course of hundreds of years the German hordes did their utmost to destroy the Roman civilization. Theirs was the last great group of peoples to accept it, nor was it by direct transmission, as in the case of France, Spain, southern Britain, and certain nations in the Balkan region, but rather by indirect imitation. They were later the first to belie and to dishonour the higher and nobler phases of its Christianized form.

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**Abandonment of concealment and shame.** Prussia, after 1870, as Bebel, the socialist, declared, became "victory-drunk," and the rapid growth of her power carried her intoxication thenceforth to the point of delirium and hysteria. The leaders of German thought became first pharisaical in their exemplification of what they termed *Kultur*, and then in their rage at its non-acceptance outside of the immediate German sphere, obeyed the impulse of despite and fear and began to advocate an education in hatred, directed against those self-opinionated foreign peoples that were most likely to stand in the way of the establishment of that untempered German domination which was the dearest object of their dreams. Thus, Dr. Fuchs, one of their noted publicists, declared himself: "Let us abolish false shame. . . . We must not hesitate to announce: To us is given faith, hope, and hatred, and the greatest of these is hatred."

Long before the Great War became imminent, the fellows of this frenzied leader followed his advice, and abolished shame.

The realization of how terrific the struggle was to be, once it was unchained, lifted the last fold of the thin veil which their hypocrisy or their self-deception had hitherto worn. And a few weeks after the commencement of the war, while the world was shuddering with horror at some of the early deeds of Germanic savagery, a spokesman

of the real sentiment of the nation<sup>1</sup> said in his own conspicuous journal:

Let us drop our miserable attempts to excuse Germany's action. Not against our will, and as a nation taken by surprise did we hurl ourselves into this gigantic venture. We willed it. We do not stand before the judgment-seat of Europe. We acknowledge no such jurisdiction. Our might shall create a new law in Europe. It is Germany that strikes. When she shall have conquered new domains for her genius, then the priesthoods of all the gods will praise the God of War

**Frank admission of barbarism.** The same writer proclaimed that it was "Germany's declared will to engage in universal war as a national industry."

Such were the style and spirit of these diatribes that, with a different setting, they might easily have passed as indiscretions of the Kaiser himself. In moments of surexcitation Wilhelm had given too frequent examples of the excessive exercise of his tongue and his pen. Again General von Disfurth, a publicist of the Bernhardian school, declared in a published article:

Frankly we are and must be barbarians, if by that we understand those who wage war relentlessly and to the uttermost degree. . . . Every act committed by our troops to discourage, defeat and destroy our enemies is a brave and good act and is fully justified.

<sup>1</sup> Maximilian Harden, in *Die Zukunft*.

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. . . Germany stands as the supreme arbiter of her own methods, which in time of war the world must be compelled to accept. . . . For my part I hope that we have merited in this war the title of barbarians.

If this declaration, too, had been known to have emanated from the Kaiser, no one who had studied his public utterances would have been greatly surprised. And, further, Erzberger, a leader of the conservative party in the Reichstag:

The war . . . ought to be as pitiless as possible. This . . . is a principle of the greatest humanity. If the means were found to annihilate the whole of London, it would be more humane than to allow a single German to bleed on the field of battle, since so radical a means would quickly lead to peace.

The German General Hartman wrote:

When the national war breaks forth terrorism becomes a necessary military principle. . . . The fighter has need of passion. . . . Every military effort is above all personal. It supposes the total affirmation of individual character. It requires that the fighter who makes this effort shall be wholly freed from the restraints of legality, which are embarrassing and altogether oppressive. . . . Violence and passion, these are the two principal levers in every act of war, and let us say it fearlessly, of all warlike grandeur. . . . Effective warfare absolutely demands for its success that precedence be given it over all the requirements which international law, scientifically

constituted, can seek to put forward. . . . The law of nations must not paralyse military action. . . . It would be ridiculous, indeed, to embrace the chimera which consists in a failure to recognise that war in the present age must be conducted with a rigour more destitute of scruple, with a greater and more general violence, than ever before. . . . Modern warfare employs means that are too colossal, in material and numbers; it subjects the national well-being to too violent an ordeal, and it exacts too absolute an appropriation of the total economic resources of the state, not to require as an inevitable condition the use without restriction of all the armed force which it places in line.

**The moral law of conquest.** "Woe to the vanquished!" Marshal von Haessler, honoured by the Kaiser, was quoted by one of his military disciples as saying:

Must civilization rear its temples on mountains of corpses, by seas of tears and with the death-sighs of the slain? Yes, she must. *If a people has the right of domination, its power of conquest constitutes the highest moral law*, and before it the vanquished must bow. Woe unto the vanquished!

The exaltation of hatred into a fanatic ecstasy was the most striking symptom of German national madness. The popular anthem, *Deutschland über Alles*, the original significance of which was that Germany was loved by her children above all

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else, became the recognized expression of the political mania which now possessed the people. It was sung with passion and frenzy throughout the land. But it was soon largely superseded by two other songs, each of them entitled the *Hymn of Hate*, which reflected more intensely and more explicitly the ruthlessness of the national purpose. One of these,<sup>1</sup> by Ernst Lissauer, was literally a cry of fury at the unexpected force and resolution of the foe, but all three of the songs, as voiced by the multitude, were an appalling proof of the degree in which its education in the gospel of force and savage terrorism had succeeded. Though Lissauer in his poem declares that England alone

<sup>1</sup> The last stanza (from Barbara Henderson's translation) of Lissauer's *Hymn of Hate*, entirely typical of the whole, is as follows:

“Take ye the folk of the earth in pay,  
With bars of gold your ramparts lay;  
Bedeck the seas with ship on ship:  
Ye reckon well, but here's your slip:  
French and Russian they matter not;  
A blow for a blow, a shot for a shot.  
We fight the battle with bronze and steel,  
And the end that's to come our Peace shall seal.  
You we will hate with a lasting hate;  
We never more will forgo our hate—  
Hate by sea and hate by land,  
Hate of head and hate of hand,  
Hate of the mass and hate of the crown,  
Of seventy millions the hate-charged frown;—  
We love as one, we hate as one,  
We have one foe, one foe alone—  
England!”

is loathed, of all the enemy nations, yet its real spirit is hatred towards every part of mankind which refuses to yield to the abominable rule that Germany would establish.

**Why Germany had no friends.** Dr. Adolf Lassen, professor at the Berlin University and privy-counsellor to the Emperor-King, added another count to Germany's self-indictment for moral and political degeneracy and almost incredible fatuity when he wrote: "We are morally and intellectually superior to all others: without equals. . . . We have no friends. All fear us and all look upon us as dangerous, because we are intelligent and active and morally superior to all."<sup>1</sup>

German arrogance, begotten of supposed superiority, had in turn begotten distrust and aversion in every part of the world. Until the Great War began this result might for many have lacked justification; not so in the subsequent months, when proof upon proof accumulated on every hand that Germany had systematically prepared herself to be the venomous enemy of all mankind. Attempted intimidation, the key to her foreign policy, had largely defeated her dearest aims. Had she not armed herself for nearly half a century against

<sup>1</sup> Professor von Seyden declared in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*: "Germany should and wishes to be alone. The Germans are the elect people of the earth. They will accomplish their destiny, which is to govern the world and to direct the other nations for the welfare of humanity."



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the world's peace, had her demands for her own aggrandizement been somewhat moderated by common-sense and due respect for the rights of others, the world would certainly have yielded to her much more than she could otherwise have gotten, and which, in just punishment of her truculent obtuseness, it was now disposed to withhold from her.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MIXED MASS OF THE AUSTRIAN EMPEROR'S SUBJECTS INDIFFERENT TO THE OBJECTS OF THE WAR

Decision in the Hands of the Military Caste—Relative Positions of the Magyars, the Austro-Germans, and the Slavs—Magyar Jealousy of the Slavs—Danger to Hungary in the Possible Erection of a Composite Slav Kingdom—Anticipation of what might Happen after Franz Josef's Death—Hohenzollern Hopes of Drawing Austria Back into the German Imperial Sphere—No Settled Rancour against the Nations of the Triple Entente—Failure of Attempted Centralization—The Austro-German Dominance largely Due to Commercial and Financial Factors—Both Magyars and Slavs Hostile to the German Idea of "Kultur"—Weakened Hold of the Dynasty upon the People—Delicate Problem of the Future.

**How the war was regarded in Austria-Hungary.** Of the spirit with which Austria-Hungary entered upon the war far less needs to be said than in the case of Germany. A synthesis of public feeling and opinion in the Austrian Empire was most difficult, because of the diversity of the population and of their prejudices and interests. In fact an absolutely common view did not exist. To an even greater extent than in Germany the military

caste determined the fateful step. This caste was hereditary in the nobility; there was even less of the popular element in it than in that of Germany; it had also less taste and less aptitude for the serious profession of arms and the real business of war. The Austro-Hungarian army, composed of very brave men, had a lamentable record of bad leadership and of repeated failure. It seemed indeed that it was predestined always to go into battle with a traditional expectation of defeat. The Hungarians and the Slavs were better fighters than the Austrians proper; but neither of the two former nationalities looked upon the war as desirable. It is true that Count Tizsa and a military faction in Hungary employed their strongest influence to bring about the war; but the mass of their compatriots were either indifferent or hostile to it, and eminent publicists and politicians protested against the virile strength of the Hungarian kingdom being used to further the greedy projects of the Pan-Germanists. The pretence that the propaganda of the Slavic associations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife justified a struggle in which Russia, France, Britain, Serbia, and Montenegro would be arrayed against Germany and Austria-Hungary found little acceptance in Hungary. Her possible loss was reckoned as far greater than her possible gain. The vast and rich province of Galicia was exposed to the attacks of

the Muscovite horde. On the other hand the further inclusion of immense numbers of Slavs, which might follow the crushing defeat of Serbia, would swell the already enormous preponderance of their race within the Empire. Of the ten nationalities, comprising 54,000,000 persons, under the same imperial rule, the Slavs counted 30,000,000, the Austro-Germans 12,000,000, and the Hungarians only 8,000,000. There were also 3,000,000 Rumanians and 1,000,000 Italians. The preponderance of the Slavs over the only two races within the imperial sphere which were their serious rivals was in a considerably greater proportion than that of three to two, and as regarded the Hungarians it was as five to two.

**Critical Situation of the Magyars.** Between the Austro-Germans and the Hungarians there had been reciprocal suspicion and hatred for hundreds of years. Had Franz Ferdinand lived and had further accessions of Slav populations been made, unless indeed they had been unreservedly given over to Hungary, as the Croats, the Slavs of the banat of Temesvar, and the Romo-Transylvanians had been, she would have found her relative importance as a member of the Empire greatly diminished. In spite of Franz Ferdinand's death, the project of erecting another constituent kingdom, largely at the expense of Hungary, out of the southern provinces, chiefly inhabited by Slavs, with the enforced addition thereto of some part,

if not the whole, of Serbia, might have been revived, in view of the critical situation of the dynasty, together with a yet earlier plan, believed to have been seriously entertained by Franz Josef in prior years, that of restoring to Bohemia her status as a kingdom, on the same plane as Hungary. In any event, if the Austrian Empire were to remain intact under any ruler who desired to give to each class of his subjects its numerical due, the Magyars would have been at a grave political disadvantage. But if the Empire were not to remain intact, a very different vista presented itself for the Pan-Germanists and the Hungarians. Even if defeated in the general conflict, Germany might hope, if the Habsburg monarchy were disrupted and autonomy were given to the Tzechs and Slavs, that in the final adjustments of peace, the old Germanic archduchy of Austria would be allotted to her. This would be really in strict accord with the modern theory of the political unity, or at least the political affiliation, of members of the same race, speaking effectively an identical tongue. The Austrians proper would probably feel very little, if any, sentimental shock in being disjointed from peoples with whom they had no essential ethnic sympathy, to be politically reunited with the central Germanic family. At the same time the Hungarians might at last regain that proud independence, for the loss of which in the sixteenth century they had never

been fully consoled. It should be remembered that before the Turks first invaded the ancient Hungarian kingdom it comprised for a time, besides the country which still bears its name, Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Wallachia, Transylvania, Moldavia, and Bulgaria, and that a far greater affinity exists between the Slavs and the descendants of the Hiungu, kinsmen of the ancient Huns and Avari, than between either of those nationalities and the Germans or Austro-Germans. It was quite natural, then, that the historical ambition of the Magyars to recover their former political grandeur should have actuated certain of their leaders to strive for that end, and that the Great War, involving the possible breaking-up of the Hapsburg Empire, should have seemed to them the long-wished-for opportunity.

**Anticipation of the death of Franz Josef.** The Germanic Austrians stood in wise dread of the vivacious force of the Hungarians, already demonstrated in political enterprise, as in warlike aptitude. Enormous concessions had been made to the Magyars after 1848, among them the overlordship of the Croats of the banat of Temesvar; yet these were far less than they regarded as their right. For many years it was predicted that the death of Franz Josef would be the signal for an entire readjustment of the interrelations of the distinctive parts of the Empire. With the awak-

ened self-interest and emboldened self-assertion of the other nationalities, whether this meant dissolution or something short of it, it could not make worse the position of Austria proper, unless she were at once to become, under arbitrary conditions, a part of the Prusso-German agglomeration. The Austro-Germans preferred this, rather than to accept the supremacy of the Hungarians or Slavs.

There is reason to believe that the military clan in Austria-Hungary was largely prompted to espouse the imprudent adventure which Germany had plotted by diplomatic intrigues on her part and by her more or less discreet pecuniary generosity.

For years men in high political or military place in Germany had made no disguise of their confident expectation, which was indeed that of the Kaiser himself, that at the break-up of the Hapsburg Empire the archduchy of Austria would be annexed to the Empire of the Hohenzollerns.

The motive which actuated Austria-Hungary's acquiescence in the Prussian scheme of roughshod coercion of the weaker contiguous states was not accompanied by any genuine national fervour, but was rather calculating and crafty. The aged Franz Josef, who enjoyed the prestige of his sixty-six years of troubled rule, without having ever inaugurated of his own volition a single generous measure for the greater good of all his subjects,

was far more truly in the hands of the dominant clique of courtiers and politicians at Vienna than was Wilhelm at Berlin. In his eighty-fifth year, after a life of unparalleled egoism, and also of signal sorrow, this unhappy monarch could hardly have been regarded as capable of any robust resolution. The course that his government was to pursue was determined chiefly by others, among whom the domineering personality of Kaiser Wilhelm was obvious, if not self-confessed.

**No settled rancour against the Triple Entente.** The people of Germany, once the war was inevitable, accepted it with a patriotic unity which in itself was magnificent, notwithstanding that its primal motive was iniquitous. Love of Kaiser and Fatherland rose to an ecstatic pitch of passionate fervour. In Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, all classes, as soon as it was known that the great Powers of the Triple Entente would be involved in the contest, were oppressed by doubt and apprehension—except only where ambition and vainglory were paramount. As was natural in so conglomerate an empire, patriotic sentiment was varied in many ways. But the outstanding trait of the people at this hour, as always, was their superficial gaiety, contrasting strangely with the sombre, even sinister, mood of the northern Teutons. None of the nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire cherished a deep-rooted rancour against the great Powers of the Triple Entente.



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The nearest approach to it was the bitter feeling towards Russia on the part of Hungary, and this was entirely independent of the Slavic question. It was a part of the tradition of 1848, when one of the noblest political uprisings of modern times was frustrated by the intervention of the Romanof Tsar on the side of the Hapsburg despotism, with an army of overwhelming strength. The more amiable temper of the inhabitants of Austria-Hungary, their greater appreciation of refined sentiment and of art, their more humane qualities, their franker cheerfulness, as compared with the Germans of the north, have been constantly remarked by travellers. Their tolerance of the archaic system of Imperial administration was something like that of the abuses of the monarchy in France by the peasant and bourgeois classes before the great Revolution. They were on good terms with their ancient dynasty because it was their habit to live according to conventional routine, and their nature to avoid trouble by implicit obedience, if necessary, or by accommodation and compromise. The various nationalities in the Empire clung tenaciously also to old forms; though this by no means meant that they would have rejected any real opportunity of attaining to true democratic liberty. Josef II., the son of Maria Theresa, had, indeed, certain ideas of reform which he sought to carry out, sincerely believing, no doubt, that his subjects would be rendered

happier thereby. He tried to abolish all political distinctions that were based upon nationality and all differences of religion, while freeing the serfs and removing restrictions from the press. In the first two respects he was too arbitrary, and in the other two too liberal, to suit the ten nationalities over which he ruled; and in rescinding his measures of so-called reform, he made the following unique and naïve confession:

We had made some changes in the government through zeal for the public welfare, with the sole hope that, when you had tried them, you would take pleasure in them. Now we are convinced that you prefer the ancient ways of government and that they are needful for your happiness.

**Confusion of political claims.** The mass of the population of the Austro-Hungarian Empire seemed never to be disposed towards gradual revolution, as the Anglo-Saxons had been, else they might have gained ground little by little against the autocratic régime, instead of accepting, as they did, the mere husks of reform, without the inner substance. Though in later years spasmodic concessions of electoral privilege were made, Germano-Austrian jealousy of the other races comprised in the Empire prevented the pursuit of a consistent policy in that direction, and parliamentary activity never in the true sense even approximated broad democratic government. The

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Imperial authority was ever confronted by a great confusion of conflicting political claims. A reconciliation of Slavs and Magyars on a basis of equality seemed impossible. The selfish pride of the latter and their desire of increased dominion were too apparent. The Magyars had been more unjust than even the Austrians themselves in their treatment of the less fortunate national groups which had passed under their rule. Arbitrary efforts were made to bring about the disuse by the latter of their native dialects, in favour of the language of the governing class. In this respect the course of Hungary in relation to the Slavs and Rumanians within her jurisdiction was exactly the same as that of Prussia in Poland and Alsace-Lorraine, and of Russia in the Baltic provinces.

But while from this and other points of view the relation of the subject mass to the sovereign in Austria-Hungary was similar to that in Germany, the general politico-social condition was widely different. Bureaucracy, plutocracy, and commercialism had taken root less strongly than in Germany. The ruling classes had not the arrogant and domineering temper of the Prussians. Organization and purely material efficiency had not been exalted into a fetich, crushing by its weight all truly idealistic aspiration. But on the other hand laxity and license held the place of justice and of liberty. The Germans of Austria

adopted as their own in 1848 the revolution which the Magyars had commenced; but their object was to centralize the government, as was done by the Prussians nearly a quarter of a century later.

The Slavs saw that this would be the end of their own dreams of separate autonomy. The Serbs and Croats fought the Magyars therefore, with the father of King Peter, Alexander Kara-georgevitch, as their leader. With the Magyars and the Tzechs thus offsetting each other, the dynasty rallied to itself the conservative elements of most of the population; but still it would have been too weak, without the Russian succour, to maintain itself in its autocratic form, and it was forced in the subsequent political readjustment to abandon the plan of developing a bureaucracy, like that of Prussia.

**Hostility to the German notion of civilization.** Magyars and Slavs alike were temperamentally hostile to the Teutonic idea of civilization. The Austro-German dominance was largely due to commercial and financial efficiency. The part played in it by the Germanized Jews was of considerable importance. Often in the great affairs of the Empire they stood behind pretentious politicians and nobles, manipulating their public actions as if they had been puppets in a *guignol*. The repugnance of the aristocracy to the sordid type of capitalism supplied a link of common interest between it and the workers. So that, even

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in Austria proper, the Teutonic plan of converting a nation into a machine of war and conquest was still far from popular acceptance.

In view of these facts, the problem of the future of the Empire after the death of Franz Josef was most delicate. The death of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand did not simplify it or render it less dangerous. The new heir-presumptive was too little known to be popular, and being young, and comparatively unschooled in public affairs, his immediate influence was almost *nil*. There is reason to believe that in Austria-Hungary, as in Germany, an apprehension of internal difficulties had considerable force in determining the venture which provoked the Great War, or at least in preventing a longer waiting for a suitable occasion. The dynastic opinion undoubtedly was that only a glorious close of the reign of Franz Josef could save the Empire from such convulsions as would probably lead to its utter disruption. Not the least element of that apprehension was the knowledge that if Germany were disappointed of her purpose of using Austria-Hungary in the achievement of her Asiatic ambitions, she would surely strive to hasten the day, always present in her ulterior calculations, when the population of the old Austrian duchy, and possibly that of Bohemia as well, would be subject to her own rule.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MAINSPRINGS OF BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS THE GREAT STATES OF CONTINENTAL EUROPE

Minor States as Safeguards to the Political Balance—Coincidence of Interest and Morality—English Slowness in Recognizing the Germanic Peril—Precariousness of Maritime Supremacy—The Kingdom and the Empire Unready when the Fateful Hour Sounded—Possibility of Invasion and the Capture of London—Force of the Peace-Loving Sentiment—Splendid Response of the People—The Dominions and the Colonies Outdo themselves.—Laying of the Civil War Spectre in Ireland—Significance of the Crime against Belgium—Its Deliberate Preparation by the Germans—Heroic Energy of her People.

**Device to arouse patriotic anger in Germany.**  
Because Germany and Austria-Hungary were the originators of the war, minuter attention has been given to their psychical state, prior to its outbreak, than will be necessary as regards the other principal belligerents, whose motives were less subtle and less complex. Except in the case of Serbia, of which I have treated in an earlier chapter, it was not contended that they had committed the least intrinsic wrong against the central empires.

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The later assertion of the Berlin government that Britain had desired the war and had manoeuvred perfidiously to bring it about, even planning to violate the neutrality of Belgium, with the connivance or aid of France, and that Russia at the same time rendered the catastrophe inevitable by arming against the threatening preparations of Austria-Hungary, does not rest upon any substantial foundation whatever. This falsehood was devised more than aught else to rouse the German nation to patriotic anger, but, further, to induce neutral nations to give sympathy and support to the coalesced aggressors.

**England's interest in the minor states.** It would be useless to contend to any one acquainted with the commercial and colonial history of England that the great change in her policy which placed her side by side with France and Russia, in antagonism to Germany, was not fundamentally actuated by selfishness and by fear for the future of her trade and her shipping, her navy and her over-seas possessions. It was not merely altruism that had caused her to favour, by a long-established policy, the small, independent, and neutral states of Western Europe. Her first interest was to preserve as nearly as possible the political equipoise of the Old World. Her situation as an insular Power, enforcing the policy of a small land-armament, precluded her absorption, or even her close domination, of any of the other minor states. It

was essential, however, to her undiminished prestige and influence that they should be preserved, since they could not succumb without increasing the prestige and strength of another nation.

**Coincidence of moral and political motives.** It would be equally false and essentially unjust to say that high principles of international probity had not a very large part in determining the British Government, moved and strengthened by public opinion, to resist the German onslaught upon all that those principles represented in modern civilization. Her most important interests thus coincided with her noblest diplomatic doctrines. In that there is nothing really extraordinary. Fortunately it had been often the case in the history of the British state, and this in itself bespoke the soundness of her political and moral foundations. That neighbourly and pacific motives were as strong in the British consciousness as the instinct of self-interest is shown in the patient attitude of tolerance and confidence which the British Government maintained in the affair of Serbia towards the German Government, long after the latter's dishonest course would fully have justified the contrary treatment.

**Repeated warnings disregarded.** Suspicion of Germany's criminal purpose ripened slowly. In 1907, at the peace conference at The Hague, the representatives of Edward VII. had suggested



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a limitation of armaments and were snubbed by those of Wilhelm II.; and they were afterwards grossly ridiculed by the German press. A similar reception was given to later informal efforts in the same direction. Bismarck's policy of conciliation of the stronger Powers had already been definitively abandoned. Nevertheless Lloyd-George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, returning from Berlin in January, 1914, declared that Britain and Germany had never been on better terms; that an increase of the British military forces would be sheer folly; that there was no longer any need, even, of strenuous exertion in naval construction.

Long before that, Britain ought to have been completely on her guard, because of very many warnings, aside even from that singularly indiscreet betrayal by the Kaiser, repeated with menacing variations by journalists and publicists: "Our future is on the seas." But she took no effective account of Germany's four decades of preparation, and persisted up to the last days of peace in holding, ostensibly at least, to the theory that she had nothing at all at stake in the vast manifestations of Germanic power, and in declaring, although a member of the Triple Entente (and with a suggestion of cautious meanness quite unworthy of the part that she had taken in certain other continental wars), that she "retained her entire liberty of action." If this attitude be not regarded as essentially mean, it must be owned at least that

prudent scrupulosity was here carried to a Quixotic extent.

**English slackness condemned by Englishmen.** Already, three years earlier, many Britons had looked with open indignation upon the apparent indifference of the ministry and the slackness of military preparation in the United Kingdom, in face of Germany's naval provocation and implied challenge; and had condemned this negligent attitude as rank folly. To them the course of their own government seemed half-puerile, half-pusillanimous. Earl Percy wrote:

All Europe is watching us with silent contempt. The nation that once boasted that it "saved" Europe! The nation which is now betraying allies and welcomes the heroism of the French people merely because it provides an excuse for its own inaction! On this side [of the Channel] humbug, sham, and makeshift; on the other, devotion, duty, and love of country! In our hearts we know they are fighting our battles as well as their own. And the sands are running out, and every day that passes makes it harder for a self-respecting Englishman to look a Frenchman in the face.<sup>1</sup>

This outburst was wholly excusable in view of the fact that the British Government had already temporized and blundered very foolishly as to the creation of army reserves for territorial defence

<sup>1</sup> Letter in the London *Daily Mail*.

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or for a possible expedition to the Continent, in aid of France or Russia. The British army was absurdly weak for the giant task which might be in store for it. It was not wonderful, therefore, that in the first stages of the Great War the Kaiser spoke of this force with derision and contempt. That it was inadequate was indisputably in large part the fault of the easy-going Liberal administration at London; but it was more radically the fault of the British nation, whose insular self-sufficiency would not admit that there could ever be any serious menace to the power and security of the Empire. It was the same species of arrogance that has bred the final and fatal weakness of every great empire that the world has seen. In this case there was yet time for an effective remedy, if self-applied, with sufficient fortitude and resolution.

**British fear of invasion.** It is true that the tradition of immediate contact with the horrors and the heroism of war had largely been lost in the British Isles. Since the attempt upon the throne by the ill-starred Duke of Monmouth which culminated so pitiably at Sedgemoor in 1685, there had been no battle worthy of the name on English soil. From 1588, the year of the armada of Philip II., to 1914, there had been only one important menace of invasion, that of Napoleon in the years 1803, 1804, and 1805, which, after all, military historians are latterly disposed

to regard as a gigantic feint, designed merely for its moral effect upon the enemy. There were apprehensions of invasion in 1859, when Napoleon "the Little," after presumptuous demands upon Britain, was winning brilliant victories over the Austrians in Lombardy; and again, in 1870, when the events of the Franco-Prussian struggle and the great progress of steam-navigation had impressively demonstrated for the first time the new possibilities of modern warfare. These alarms were short-lived, and without much permanent effect on British provision for domestic defence. But the conquest of the Boers in South Africa, from 1899 to 1902, while it caused the British army and the British Government to be "bespattered with insult" by the Germans, to quote the phrase of one of their more moderate writers, awakened a certain military enthusiasm in the realm and even in the outer dominions, and its cost in popular sacrifice suggested, though in a relatively small degree, what might be expected in the event of a great European conflict. Still the nation, which had not unitedly approved of the motives of the British attack upon the Boers, refused to view very seriously the need of a largely increased land-armament for defence and offence. Lord Roberts, Lord Wolesley, Balfour, and other distinguished leaders pointed to a possibility that a continental army, having a large transport fleet, would land in England 70,000

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men or more and take possession of London. It was not until 1905 that the danger of an invasion from Germany began really to agitate some of the longer-sighted statesmen. With the wonderful development of aviation, the perfecting of wireless telegraphy, the improvement in submarine ships, the vastly augmented destructive power of ordnance and other machinery of battle, and the continued quickening of transit, the change of the relative situation of the British Isles with reference to foreign attack became more and more accentuated. The Germans were sufficiently frank as to their purpose and their hopes. They rarely let pass the occasion to toast "The Day," as it was cabalistically called, when the British naval power was either to be paralysed or destroyed, and the British "empire of the sea" brought to a sudden and dreadful end. Enterprise and celerity were as essential for them on sea as on land. Vice-Admiral Bronsart von Schellendorf, in a volume printed for the use of the Grand General Staff of the Kaiser's forces, wrote:

To gain the command of the sea, for an instant, at any one point, so that our transports may pass, we would be justified, in certain circumstances, in sacrificing the whole of our fleet.

Lord Roberts said in November, 1908:

The danger grows more pressing. In a decade Germany has become, with the exception of England,

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the greatest maritime nation that has ever existed. . . . The moment approaches when it will be necessary to prepare for invasion. . . . Eighty thousand Germans live in the British Isles. The spy service is fully organized. . . . The mastery of the sea for only an instant and at only one point would suffice for invasion.

And again:

If we do not make haste our ships will be prisoners in our own territorial waters; public apprehension will retain our expeditionary (land) forces on our own soil; and our diplomacy will be deprived of the armed force which alone can enable it to make itself heard

Once beaten by Germany at sea, as she was in the seventeenth century by Holland, England could no longer hope that her insular position would shelter her.

The precariousness of her maritime supremacy was at last recognized. More than half of her food supplies came from abroad. The prosperity of her commerce and industries was almost wholly dependent upon her shipping. The stolid British confidence, fixed and traditional, was, it now appeared, ill-placed.

Nevertheless, the need of a strong territorial force was not popularly admitted until the Great War had actually commenced. Then the words of Wilhelm II.: "There are necessary wars: I shall

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sign the world's peace at London," awakened a sinister pang in many a British bosom.

**The critical hour for Britain.** When, indeed, the fateful hour sounded, interest, principle, and the occasion all coincided; and yet Britain was still unready. There could be no doubt that, with Germany engaged in a desperate war with France and Russia, Britain must now strike, if possible, without mercy, and annihilate for ever all hope of the first-named of becoming the foremost naval and commercial power of the globe.

But Britain, in thus striking, must first of all, in accordance with her traditional prudence, be certain that the weight of moral right was on her side. This decent respect for the opinion of mankind was greatly to her honour. But her motive was fully as much political as moral. The government before acting must be entirely secure of public opinion. The radical party, in charge of the government, was strongly pledged against bellicose action of any kind that was not absolutely dictated by necessity. The ministry of Mr. Asquith for more than six years had devoted itself almost exclusively to the social and economic betterment of the masses. Its diplomatic policy was happily marked by an absence of that offensive pretension and bluster which had sometimes characterized its predecessors. The peace sentiment was very potent in the British Isles. Lloyd-George found a wide echo when he said: "The day

will come when the nation that draws its sword against another will be put in the felon's dock, like the man who strikes his brother in anger." Under this ministry, Britain entered into a general arbitration treaty with the United States of America. She was, indeed, "by her very nature an essentially pacific power." She could not lightly risk her enormous accumulations of wealth. "She had to take into account her world-wide concerns and to await eventualities."<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the late Liberal leader, had roundly expressed this sentiment: "Peace alone conforms to our interests and our needs." England at that period had no objection to the *Welt-Politik* of the Germans, so long as it left her own special interests untouched. She gave her pledge at Berlin in 1912 that never without provocation would she attack the German Empire or take part in any such attack. And even when, by way of answer, Germany, although she was continuously adding to her military and naval power, demanded that Britain should remain neutral in any war in which she herself might be engaged, and later still, when she refused the proposal of a suspension of naval construction, the hopelessness of seeking to restrain her from wanton and unjust enterprises against her neighbours was not yet recognized by the responsible statesmen at Westminster. It was remarkable how easily they

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Hanotaux.



maintained their fatuous sense of security. No other conclusion is possible than that they permitted the self-complacent wish to be "father of the thought": in other words, that they fondly blinded themselves to the reality.

**Peril of the French channel ports.** The major British public opinion was primarily against participation in the contest, even after Germany had declared war against Russia. Only when attention was fixed upon the fact that the German fleet, if unchecked, would be likely to ravage the sea-coast and take possession of ports of immense strategical as well as commercial value immediately confronting Dover, Folkestone, and the mouth of the Thames, did it begin positively to make itself audible in favour of Russia and France. Then came the test of the German estimation of the moral value of treaties, of that one in particular which decreed the neutrality and independence of Belgium, essential in the eyes of Britain not only to her own safety, but to that of Europe. A thrilling crisis of opinion followed, and then the climax of outraged sentiment, a profound shock at the violation by the Germans of the most sacred laws of honour and humanity. This led irresistibly to the supreme resolve for war.

The speeches of British statesmen rang from that moment with the old spirit of Chatham, Burke, and Fox. England had never expected to engage in such a war. She had harboured no designs

against Germany. She was not actuated by cupidity. She coveted nothing that was possessed by other nations. Her motives, one of her ministers declared, with pardonable absoluteness, were those of "pure chivalry in defence of the weak." The destructive and murderous invasion of Belgium was a deed of wanton and premeditated treachery against humanity. If it were not punished civilization would be indeed a failure; "the sceptre of right would have been broken," and "force, brute force, would once again be enthroned among the nations." Belgium had been "asked by Germany to give her the opportunity to drive her dagger into the heart of a good neighbour." There was contemptuous indignation noble in its intensity at the deceitfulness of the German ministers. They had sought to "throw the dust of fine ethical phrases in the face of the English people."

**The existence of the British Empire in peril.** Now that British eyes were opened to Germany's preposterous designs, it was repeated in Parliament again and again that the very existence of the British Empire was in peril. If Germany were the victor, Britain would be forced to abdicate her world-primacy and would at once sink to the relative rank of Spain or Norway. Her colonial empire would crumble; her sea-trade would dwindle under overbearing and truculent competition. Her food-supplies, all her exterior lines of communication, the mother-domain itself would be

insecure. Germany would annex Belgium, and the French ports and departments on the English Channel, and might also seize both Egypt and Morocco. Holland would be compelled to open the Scheldt for German men-of-war, and Amsterdam and Rotterdam would become more thoroughly Germanized than ever. Germany and Austria would build up a land, sea, and air power to subdue ultimately the British people, as the inhabitants of the islands had been successively subdued in the first millennium of the era by Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans. There was now no alternative but to destroy the German power or else to suffer political and commercial extinction.

**Splendid response of the people of the Empire.** The popular response to the danger was most inspiring. Britain, denounced so often since Napoleon's time, by sneering continentals, as "a nation of shopkeepers," became suddenly an incensed people, breathing war and righteous retribution. Instead of a land force of less than 150,000 men, which was all, aside from her fleets, which she was at first expected to send to the aid of the French and Belgians, she actually in the course of nine months poured into the plains and marshes and hill-ranges of Picardy, the Artois, and Flanders more than a million volunteers and regular soldiers, who proved themselves among the bravest who had ever flung themselves into a

great struggle beyond the limits of the realm. Of this number a large proportion were from the over-seas colonies and dominions, notably from India, Canada, and Australasia. This manifestation of unity with the motherland in patriotic feeling was as splendid as it was spontaneous. Men of all classes, from the highest to the humblest, gave superb evidence that they regarded resistance to the madly aggressive projects of Germany as not only a duty to themselves, in view of the jeopardy in which the national future was placed, but as a greater and more sacred duty to mankind.

The Kaiser's Government had counted on quite a different state of things. "First it was profoundly disappointed that Britain should enter the contest at all. British neutrality was an unquestionable postulate at the very root of the scheme of the empire-builders of Berlin."<sup>1</sup> But in the event of Britain's participation, it had hoped for coldness towards the motherland in the time of need, on the part of Australia and Canada; for civil war in Ireland, and for revolt in Egypt, India, and South Africa. But the unprovoked menace to the Empire and its allies, above all the shameful assault upon the most cherished tenets of civilization and the honour of nations, had amazed and angered every people, in whatever part of the world, that was not still in the thrall

<sup>1</sup> Dr. E. J. Dillon.

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of barbarism, or possessed of unworthy passion and prejudice.

**India surpasses all expectation.** Where the British Empire had been supposed to be most vulnerable was India; but there the indigenous princes and peoples surpassed everything that could have been looked for in fervent loyalty and generous offers of troops, money, and equipments. No higher tribute was ever paid to the efficiency of Anglo-Saxon rule and Anglo-Saxon civilizing methods in remote lands. By the other imperial dominions also warships, large bodies of soldiers, armed and equipped, and enormous quantities of war-provisions were immediately tendered.

**Irish dissensions in abeyance.** But the most impressive spectacle evoked by this extreme test of the British spirit was the instant sinking of all partisan feuds. The pending question of "home-rule" for Ireland, out of which had grown the apprehension of civil war, was, with the ready assent of the powerful Opposition in the House of Commons, indefinitely postponed. Redmond, leader of the Irish Nationalists, in a speech in Parliament, said:

I pray with all my heart and soul that out of this war one blessed result may come, and that is that as Irishmen go forward, fighting side by side, Catholics and Protestants, North of Ireland and South of Ireland, so may it prove to be the sign of the future unity

of the Irish nation. . . . On which side does the Irish people want to stand—on that of Great Britain and Ireland, with Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, or on the side of Germany? . . . The only choice of honour, the only choice of safety, the only choice of statesmanship is to defend wherever it is necessary, either at home or abroad, the liberties and possessions that Ireland has won within the Empire, and to join with the democracy of the Empire in defending its liberties against their declared enemy.

Thus the very volunteers, 100,000 in number, who for months had been drilling to prevent the government by force of arms from imposing the rule of a separate parliament upon the great northern province of Ulster, enrolled themselves with eager zeal for the mightier struggle abroad. Every voice that was lifted in every part of the realm and in all the dominions except South Africa rang with the true accent of absolute devotion to the vital cause of the nation. A small revolt of the Boers, largely dependent upon aid and co-operation from Germany and the neighbouring German colonies, served only to mark more emphatically the solid loyalty of the great mass of the South African citizens.

Asquith's definition of the British Empire was justified: "A community of free volitions, the scope of which is ceaselessly enlarged." The British King spoke truthfully in the high tone be-

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longing to him, in his proclamation to the princes and peoples of his Indian Empire:

The calamitous conflict is not of my seeking. My voice has been cast throughout on the side of peace. . . . Had I stood aside when in defiance of pledges . . . the soil of Belgium was violated and her cities laid desolate, when the very life of the French nation was threatened with extinction, I should have sacrificed my honour and have given to destruction the liberties of my Empire and of mankind.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE RUSSIANS ENTER UPON AN ETHNIC CRUSADE, AFTER LONG SUFFERANCE OF THEIR BROTHERS' WRONGS

Instinctive Impulse of the Masses—The National Philosophy  
a Reflex of the Popular Character—Intellectual and Political  
Regeneration—Development of the Idea of an Altruist  
Mission of Moral Supremacy—Likeness and Unlikeness to  
the French—The Autocracy as Opposed to the Bureau-  
cracy—Logic of the Tsar's Liberal Attitude towards the  
Poles—The Misfortunes of Russian Poland most largely  
Due to the Native Nobility—The Slavophile Movement—  
Devotion of the Russian Peasant to the Tsar—Faith of  
Millions of the Educated Classes in the Beneficent Inten-  
tions of Nicholas II.—The Issue Thrust upon him, and  
Long Inevitable—The "War for Peace."

**Russia enters upon an ethnic crusade.** The entrance of Russia upon this war seemed reminis- cent in a degree of the rising in mass of the popu- lations of Southern and Western Europe in the eleventh century to follow the Cross for the deliver- ance of the Sacred Tomb in Palestine. It was predominantly an ethnic crusade. Russia had many times been aroused to anger and anguish over the wrongs and the blasted hopes of the



kindred peoples of the Balkans; but never before had her passion of resentment and her resolve for remedial action been so powerful or so deep. Giants are proverbially good-natured; so too are nations, whose sum of resources, whether material or moral or both, is greater than that of the majority of their neighbours. Potentially this was true of Russia. Her passion against Austria-Hungary and Germany had nothing of the quality of a permanent and ingrained hatred. Jealousy and envy certainly had no part in it. Magnanimity and tolerance towards other nations had been her characteristics for centuries. But this passion was now common to all her people. Patience and long-suffering could no further go. The hour had come for seeing that justice was done. And while redress and better fortune were to be gained for the Slavs of Southern Europe, Russia herself would incidentally obtain, if possible, after centuries of denial, the privilege to which every really great nation is by nature entitled: a door of easy egress and ingress for her external commerce and her navy. For the prevention of many years of future international tension, with its continual menace of war, it was just as necessary that the question of the custodianship of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and the definitive status of Constantinople should be settled as it was that civilization should be for ever freed from the curse and dread of the Germanic reaction.

**Attitude of the Russian masses.** It is largely true that the masses of the Russian population did not thoroughly understand either the Balkan question or the question of the Dardanelles, or the motives of Germany and Austria-Hungary in precipitating the war. But they knew two things: That millions of their racial brothers were suffering in the south for the lack of that irresistible aid which the greater millions in the north could readily and gladly give them, and to which they were entitled by reason of consanguinity and of common humanity; and that Russia, Titan that she was among nations, whose lustiness of life and intensity of aspiration were scarcely voiced because words were inadequate to them, felt the stifling want of the outer air of the great untrammelled world.

The Russian masses move instinctively and sympathetically in obedience to the intellectual and moral dynamics of their qualified leaders. Having retained for the most part their communal democracy almost unimpaired, they are freer in the details of their strictly local government than most of the more elaborately organized peoples of Europe. The bureaucracy of Russia was grafted upon its ancient institutions by Teutonic influences; but it has never corrupted the heart of the peasant or cowed him into abjection. He is not servile. Despite his obvious faults, he is essentially noble of soul. "He thinks of God and the

Tsar as in one category, and of all the rest of the universe as in another." Korolenko wrote of him that he had a kind of paradoxical and fine pride which saved him from utter subjection, and Ghorki that "his soul was famished for the ideal." He remains an individualist, dreamy, resigned, submissive to nature. To him the great Slavic cause was less a political interest than a religion.

**Russian philosophy the simplest and noblest.** The peculiar Russian philosophy is at once the noblest and the simplest in the world. It is in sharp contrast to the hardness and the cynical selfishness of the Treitschke doctrine. The Russian philosophers lay the greatest stress upon duty, and in their eyes "progress is the increase of human happiness"; patriotism the desire for such progress. One nation cannot gain real happiness at the expense of another nation. This philosophy is a true reflection of the Russian nature. The Russian people are more sensitive, more generous, more tolerant, more humane than their governing class, on which unfortunately until recent years they have had only an indirect influence. Modesty and diffidence, a strong disposition to contentment, a lack of initiative which has been too positively defined as weakness, have been the chief causes of their political backwardness. Before the revolutionary outbreak in 1905, they stood relatively very much in the same political position as did the English in the seventeenth

century. The faults of the Romanof government were no greater than those of the governments of France and Britain at like periods of their history. The picture of misery, of disorder, of cruel repression of political manifestations even so late in England as a hundred years ago or less, is dark enough to justify the comparison with the internal condition of Russia, with its much vaster territory and its population nearly four times greater. Again the story of Ireland is even a blacker blot on the British escutcheon than that of Poland upon the Russian.

**Absurd notions about Russia due to ignorance.**

The Russian masses act more from motives of the heart than from those of the head. The educated classes are different. They suffer largely from moral and intellectual diseases, with which they have been infected through a too pedantic intimacy with the literature of Western Europe. The most of the really distinctive literature of Russia is otherwise inspired, as are also her music and her modern art. The value of the Russian language itself is not well understood by other nationalities. It is noble, full, and strong, and for the mental discipline that it imposes comparable to the Latin or Greek.

One of the absurd prejudices of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries among the nations of the West is that which set the Russians apart, with much the same sense of strangeness as that with

which the Chinese were regarded. It was one of the effects of cherished ignorance. The Russians, who are of the same Aryan stock as the other European nations, kin of the Kelts, the Teutons, the Anglo-Saxons, and the Latins, are chiefly distinguished from them by their lack of modern sophistication.

The brisker pulse of regeneration has been felt by the Russians in the last fifty years, as it was at an earlier period by the British, the French, the Germans, and the Italians. For ages Nekrasov's characterization, written in 1873, had been true:

Poor and abounding,  
Downtrodden and all-mighty  
Art thou, our Mother Russia;

but only partly so in these later years. Since the middle of the last century Russia had steadily developed a sounder self-consciousness. A lover of simplicity and peace, more fully realizing the meaning of fraternity and equality than the Englishman or the Frenchman, and patiently awaiting the great day when a broader liberty (which the typical Muscovite did not desire so ardently as had the others) would be his, the Russian gradually formed unto himself the high ideal of a mission of moral supremacy, which should prove a boon to the rest of the world; which, indeed, might be a reconstructive power of as great value as had been the colonizing genius of the Anglo-Saxons. Thus the

Slavophile movement began, and thus it came to actuate the directors of the Russian masses, who themselves were hardly capable of thus defining it.

**Teutonic mastery of the Slavs.** A broader liberty was never so ardently desired by the Russian as by the Englishman or the Frenchman because his communal liberty was much greater than that of either of them. In his immediate local affairs he is more self-governing even than the citizen of the American federated states. A measurable contentment due to this condition tended to circumscribe his political vision. It needed an intense aggravation of the evils of bureaucratic centralization to rouse him to the degree of anger which produced the tremendous upheaval of 1905, the like of which was never seen before except in the great Revolution of France. And these climactic events illustrate both the likeness and the unlikeness of the two nations. France had been as long-suffering as Russia had been under absolutism of kings and the delegated tyranny of petty masters, feudal and fiscal in the one case, chiefly bureaucratic in the other. The Slavs were once the possessors of middle Europe as far as the Elbe, and, inevitably, strong traces of their blood existed throughout the German nation which was of later segregation. The German warriors overwhelmed the Slavs in middle Europe, and made serfs of them, wherever they remained. The Slav traits

chiefly persisted in the peasants. The aristocracy, the overlords, were Teutonic. The old Slav nobles had been swept away in Prussia in the peasant insurrection of 1261. Friedrich Wilhelm I. and his successors did all that was possible to keep the Prussian peasants in a state of barbarism. They were far more degraded than were the French and Russians.

**Affinity of the Slavs and the Kelto-Latins.** In Russia the superior part of the political organism in the earlier reigns of the Romanofs was also chiefly Teutonic; but numerically it was never strong enough to overwhelm the Slavic mass of the people. Ethnically the Russian proper remained one of the purest specimens of the Aryan stock in the entire world. Between him and the Latin and Keltic strains there was an immense community of instinct and of sentiment. When the Franco-Russian alliance was formed, therefore, the sympathy between the Slavs and the French, in the latter of whom those two strains are more largely blended than in any other modern nation, was not a thing of yesterday. Alexander I. had been strongly drawn towards France, and he might have continued the ally of Napoleon, if the latter had not insanely forfeited his confidence and friendship. And it was Alexander I. who resisted every suggestion of a dismemberment of France in 1815, against the rapacious desire of Prussia. The Russian diplomacy, despite the

cancerous growth of bureaucracy upon the body politic, has remained for a hundred years the frankest and the most generous in Europe. The imperial family, although originally of alien stock, had inevitably imbibed something of the distinctive spirit of the Russian commonalty. But for the bureaucracy Russia would undoubtedly have been much farther on the road to genuine constitutional freedom than she was at the beginning of the Great War. Every step in that direction, from the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 to the establishment of the Duma, had been taken by the will of the Tsar, in obedience to the aspirations of the people, and in despite of the will of the bureaucracy. It was Nicolas II., Tsar of Russia, who first besought Europe to seek another way of settling disputes between nations than the shedding of seas of blood. A similar motive in part actuated Alexander I. in the formation of the so-called Holy Alliance, after the Napoleonic wars. It was this same Nicolas whose moderation in the vain negotiations for peace which preceded the Great War will still command in many ages to come the sincere admiration of mankind.

The imperial dynasty had a greater interest in placating the part of the Polish nation which it took as its share, in the partitions of 1772, 1791, and 1794, than in keeping alive its hatred and resentment. But, as always, the bureaucracy, seizing as a pretext in this instance the selfish plot-



ting of the native nobility, the most tyrannical in the world, proved the worst possible enemy of the autocracy, by holding the peasantry responsible for a rebellion into which they had been misled. This was the genesis of that long series of Russo-Polish troubles which was the cause of as much misrepresentation as it was of misery. The Tsar had always wished to relieve the atrocious burdens imposed upon the peasants by the Polish nobles; and by decree in 1864 he took from the latter one half of their hereditary lands to give to the former, and abolished entirely the feudal taxes. Not long after Nicolas II. came to the throne he also expressed the desire to alleviate the political condition of the Poles in his Empire. The inveterate opposition of the bureaucracy to all liberal measures, however, was here again successful in causing a procrastination which seemed destined to be almost interminable. As the whirlwind of peasant rage in 1905 had created the occasion for the Tsar to countenance the erection of a popular legislature in defiance of the bureaucracy and of the blood-stained secret police, so the menace of Germanic conquest, which put all of Russia to the test of life or death, afforded another and even nobler opportunity.

**Nicolas II. and his opportunities.** No one who had studied the character of Nicolas II. could doubt that his announcement, in the first stage of the Great War, that Russian Poland should be-

come autonomous and that all of ancient Poland, if the anti-German allies were victorious, should be freed and united as an autonomous kingdom, forming part of the Muscovite Empire, was due more largely to a sincere desire to benefit his subjects than it was to coldly political considerations. There was nothing of the character of a Louis IX. of France in this monarch.

The Poles of Russia had for the most part clearly discriminated between the Tsar and the sinister administrative organization which hedged him about. Ignorance had continually exaggerated and distorted the truth relative to Russia's treatment of Poland. Outside observers, partially informed and misinformed, almost always lost sight of the racial affinity which made the Pole more kindly disposed fundamentally to the rule of the Tsar than to that of either of the Germanic Kaisers. The impression, laboriously produced, of a deep-grained anti-Muscovite sentiment in the Polish peasantry was false. It would have been easy for the Russian Tsar to win his Polish subjects to a loyal affection towards himself, if it had not been, first, that the bureaucracy stood between them; second, that the Polish aristocracy never were reconciled to the destruction of the old oligarchical chaos, which made of Poland, even in its freest days, the most unhappy country ruled by a king in the whole of Europe; and third, that the neighbouring Powers intrigued to en-

courage the treasonable attempts of anarchic and nihilist malefactors in order to embarrass the Saint Petersburg Government by keeping alive the enmity between it and its Polish subjects.

It is thus easy, when the salient features of the modern history of Russia (many of which must necessarily be passed over in silence) are well understood, to differentiate the relation of the people in the whole of the Empire towards the dynasty itself from that which it held to the bureaucratic administration of the government. In all of the provinces of Russia the peasant looks upon all the functionaries who stand between him and the Tsar with an innate contempt. He instinctively feels himself to be better than they, and he yields obedience to them only from a mixed sense of necessity and tolerance. As to a study of the intricate problems of politics he is incurably indolent. "On the very day the average man really desires political liberty he will get it," says one of the clearest contemporary writers on Russia.<sup>1</sup> The fact was fully proved by the alacrity with which the demands of the "average Russian" were granted in 1905, under the terror of his cyclonic uprising.

**Intensity of the Russian patriotism.** Vague as is the patriotism of the Russian peasant, it is none the less intense. Perhaps it is rather the more so because there is so little chance of its ardour being frittered away by attention to details of policy

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Baring.

which involve compromises between principles and expediency.

Beyond the general need of Holy Russia and her children the peasant in August, 1914, knew little of the merits of the unexampled conflict that was to convulse Europe and to carry alarm and anxiety into the remotest corners of the earth. Among her children he counted the southern peoples whose blood flowed from the same atavic source. The whys and wherefores of that need, the dialectical elements of its advocacy, could add nothing to the strength of the inspired impulse which would in any event have caused him to spring to her aid at whatever moment she might call. Only the revered voice of the Tsar, for whom his love was still simple and untainted, could quicken him, and this in spite of the fearful wrongs too often suffered at the hands of the imperial ministers, instruments of the conscienceless bureaucracy.

When it was thus quickened, the whole Russian nation moved without questioning or deviation of purpose to the accomplishment of its patriotic task.

**Quickening of the Russian nation.** Such was the stupendous spectacle when in August, 1914, the Tsar proclaimed his solemn resolve to resist Germany and Austria-Hungary to the utmost in their effort to trample underfoot the rights and hopes of the southern Slavs.

Millions of educated Russians who did not belong to the bureaucracy, even though detesting the general system of the central government and above all the dark and infamous tyranny of the secret police, had implicit faith in the Tsar. They believed in his honest intentions towards his people; and that he wished to give them all the liberty compatible with the order and security of the Empire. All of Russia knew that the war had been thrust upon him; all the people, now that it was declared, looked upon it as a thing which had been long inevitable, and as necessary to the honour of the nation. In their characteristic phrase, and in their sincere belief, it was "the war for peace." They were sure that if heroically carried to its just conclusion it would win a blessing for them and for the entire world.

## CHAPTER X

### HOW FRANCE FACED THE GREAT WAR AFTER FORTY YEARS OF GERMAN TRUCULENCE

Her Enemy continuously Invited her Hatred—Convalescence of the Nation after the Catastrophe of 1870—Much of the Old Idealism Preserved—Waterloo and its Lesson of Peace—Radicalism Suffers from Crimes and Scandals—France Poisoned by Germanic Ideas and German Intrigues—A Universal System of Espionage—Every Sphere of Life Invaded by the Kaiser's Creatures—"The War before the War"—French Magnanimity evilly Rewarded—Obtuseness of the Parliamentary Majority—In Spite of Failure to Prepare for the Inevitable, All Classes Spring to the Defence of the Country—Recrudescence of Religious and Moral Feeling—Resolution, Fortitude, Readiness for Sacrifice, and Confidence in the Triumph of Justice and Humanity Dominant.

FOR France the Great War, though by the fault of her politicians and statesmen she was unprepared for it, was a fated event, long foreseen. It was both desired and dreaded. There might have been a possibility after 1870, if the German temperament and character had been different, that the lapse of time would have brought reconciliation; that cordial esteem and confidence would have been re-established between the former belligerents, even though the wrong of Alsace-Lorraine were never fully forgotten. Wilhelm

I. had not erred in 1879 when he wrote to Bismarck: "The desire of vengeance only drowns in France. Germany would need allies in the event of war."

**Cruel tyranny in Alsace-Lorraine.** The Germans were not generous victors. Their general attitude towards France tended always to keep the wound alive, and the treatment of the native inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine by the Imperial Government irritated and troubled her still more. France indeed suffered from the "malady of vengeance"; but the simple regaining of Alsace-Lorraine would have cured it. It is not in the French nature to cherish rancour very long after the immediate cause of it has ceased. It seemed, however, despite the fair words of Wilhelm II. to the French ex-minister at Kiel, that the Germans were not at heart desirous that their late antagonists should forgive and forget. The people of the annexed regions were continually subject to persecution, mockery, denial of their rights, derisive similitudes of reform, unjust fiscal exactions, stupid, clumsy, and brutal efforts to force those who adhered to the use of the French language and to French customs and associations to abandon them, and cruel measures of repression against those who sought to lead in organized movements for the conservation of the old provincial spirit: in short, to every form of tyranny that was at once presumptuous, short-sighted, and mean. Among many outrages, the abuse of Alsatian

recruits and the offer of a reward, by a Prussian officer at Zabern, to any soldier of his battalion who would strike down a provincial for casting ridicule upon it, produced a climax of contemptuous anger against German militarism, not only in France, but in nearly all other lands. Increased ridicule of the soldiery, further disturbances, the sabring of an innocent cobbler, and the arrest of even local magistrates intensified the ignominy in which the army was held. Public opinion was scandalized throughout the world by a telegram of approbation sent by the Prussian Kronprinz to the commander of the battalion stationed at Zabern, which, however, the Imperial Government deemed it wise soon afterwards to order elsewhere. The whole affair had been followed by the people of South Germany, especially those of Baden and Bavaria, with open manifestations of shame and disgust.

**Ceaseless menace on the part of Germany.** No course, if expressly calculated with the object of keeping the souls of the French of the motherland and of the native inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine in perfect political and social sympathy, could have been more completely successful. Furthermore the needless barbarities committed by the invaders in 1870 still rankled in the memories of many who had witnessed them, and the bitter tradition of them had a powerful influence upon the younger generations.



The French were incapable of abjectness of behaviour towards their enemy, whatever might be the momentary apprehensions or feebleness of purpose of their government. From the press and the tribune Germany continually received in full face the unflattering truth about herself, as well as innumerable denunciations which were more or less exaggerated, although not wilfully false. Patriotic passion cannot always choose its words, nor scan their import in advance. German invective was equally fierce, and usually much coarser. The polemic combat appeared to be perpetual. It kept the fire of mutual hatred incessantly ablaze. But worse than this was the standing menace which Germany chose to maintain. It did not consist merely in her unexampled and ever-growing armaments. Hardly ever was it absent from the tone of her journalists, her publicists, her orators; and rarely even from their words. Bismarck had said that "the Prussians must bleed France white." As if to make doubly sure that this savage dictum should not be forgotten, Bernhardi repeated it in ampler form: "France must be so weakened that she can never cross our path again," and the changes were rung upon this by the whole tribe of bellicose writers and speakers in Germany. In 1912, according to a statement which the *Gazette* of Brunswick published unrebuked, both the Kaiser and his Chancellor expressed the emphatic opinion that

Germany had more to fear from France than from England. The journal added, thereupon, this further echo of Bismarck: "France must be bled to the last drop, for she would be the most priceless of hostages, above all in view of her empire in North Africa, which she has recently rounded out in so tempting a fashion." A pan-Germanic agrarian newspaper about the same time said that there was "no possibility of a cordial understanding between France and Germany and that Germany should act accordingly."

Thus France was never allowed for one moment to forget the impending menace, a true sword of Damocles the presence of which in greater or less degree marred almost every function of her national life. Bismarck had twice sought to renew the onslaught of 1870<sup>1</sup> and each time was prevented by the benevolent offices of other Powers.

### **The umbrageous spirit of Germany. Wilhelm**

<sup>1</sup> The first time in 1875, on the pretext that the defences around Nancy were being unduly strengthened. The German Emperor made known to Marshal MacMahon, President of France, his intention of sending an overwhelming army to occupy Nancy the moment the first spadeful of earth should be turned towards the erection of new fortifications. France appealed to Russia and England. The Tsar and Queen Victoria, it was said, rebuked both Bismarck and MacMahon and suggested that the project of fortification should be allowed to fall into abeyance under some plausible pretext of procrastination. The second instance was in 1886, apropos of the "Schnaebeler affair." Before this was settled, an order for the mobilization of the French forces had been signed.

II. lost few opportunities of shaking the "mailed fist" in the face of the Republic, only to be further convinced of her admirable self-control and of her courageous firmness. The contrast with the German spirit, as displayed in ministerial utterances, is most striking. Bethmann-Hollweg, in a public speech which was construed as almost a declaration of war against Russia, declared: "Whenever the trouble begins it is certain that we shall have to cross swords with France."

It was inevitable, under such conditions, that the French people should attribute to the Germans a malicious and narrow hatred, the offspring of mingled envy and fear.

There have been few such noble records as the rise of the French nation from the depths of defeat and sorrow to which it had been hurled in 1870 to the splendid political and economical position to which had attained forty-four years later, and this in spite of the never-tiring counter-efforts of its ever-truculent rival. Its hatred of Germany was not fundamental, but merely conditional. Its whole resolve was to regain its legitimate and historic place in the world-family. It was now once again a great colonial Power, with wider actual possessions even than before the reign of Louis XV. Lack of self-confidence after 1870 and the bitter memory of its betrayal by Napoleon III. and his generals were largely the cause of its distrust of later presidents and ministers. For

years the Republic seemed almost constantly on the verge of revolution. Such dangers as the clerico-monarchist plot under the Broglie ministry and the reactionary and militarist Boulanger movement, the Panama Canal scandal, which showed corruption in very high places, and the factional pressure which under the guise of "nationalism," "plebiscitism," and "anti-Semitism" provoked the totally needless "Dreyfus affair," were safely weathered in spite of the tremendous effervescences that they produced. Gradually the national self-consciousness became normal again. In spite of her loss of military and political prestige, by reason of the pitiable collapse of the Second Empire, and in spite of the deterioration of certain elements of her special organism, France had preserved in a very large degree her noble idealism and her refined conceptions of life; and had continued valiantly to advance (her greatest glory lies, perhaps, in this fact) along the high-road of important intellectual achievement.

Notwithstanding Germany's political strides, her prodigious material development, her forced prosperity, and the teeming growth of her population, France had never esteemed her to be either as happy or as richly dowered as herself. Nothing that Germany possessed was really envied by France, except the severed districts of Alsace and Lorraine. Buelow declared that rancour towards Germany was "the soul of French policy"; but

at the same time he recognized as the principal characteristic of the French people that they "put psychical before material needs." This superlative compliment, reluctantly or perhaps unguardedly given by one of the ablest and broadest-minded of the German statesmen, and of which any nation could well be proud, was very near to expressing the essential difference between the French and the German nature. By exactly reversing it the remark of Buelow would have perfectly fitted his own countrymen: "It is the principal characteristic of the German people that they put material before psychical needs."

But the honest pride of the French could not be stifled. They felt themselves to be morally superior to the Germans, and this consciousness they were at no pains to hide. If that life be the most civilized which in all its various interests and its mental and psychical, social and industrial activities is the best balanced (hence the most temperate, the most sanely occupied), then the French were certainly justified in their self-contentment.

**Detestation of war dating from Waterloo.** But this self-contentment was far from being absolute. The French were well aware of many of their faults and as a people had always been highly self-critical. France indeed was greatly disturbed by internal differences. For several generations the evident distaste of the masses for military service

had belied somewhat the heroic glamour of her history. Ever since the great Revolution, when they were forced to defend themselves and their territory against foreign armies which sought to restore in its entirety the old system of unlimited monarchy, the principles of the French democracy had been more pacific than otherwise. The craze for purely military glory under the first Napoleon had not indeed obsessed the laborious masses as a whole. The historian Michelet announced that it was France's mission to proclaim "the world's peace," and he was profoundly acquainted with the temper of his countrymen. The Republic herself would never have made war, had it not been forced upon her. From the year of Waterloo until late in the nineteenth century, though not one whit less brave or less apt in the bearing of arms than were their forefathers, Frenchmen, according to Treitschke himself, had held war in utter disgust. This, in contrast with the German theoretic love of war, throws a further penetrative light upon the psychic origin of the Great Conflict.

**A reminder of Fontenoy.** In 1914, nearly all Frenchmen looked upon the making of war as barbarous, as an abomination, as a crime against humanity. In the last days of July, the attitude of abstention and self-restraint imposed upon the French army along the threatened frontier, leaving to Germany the damning responsibility of the aggressor, appeared to most foreign critics as the

exaggeration of a wise scruple. For many it savoured far too much of that fantastic chivalry which impelled the gentlemen-soldiers on either side at Fontenoy to insist that those on the other should fire first. But in 1745 the French were prepared for battle; and they were not so prepared in 1914. In modern warfare, to invite an increase of adverse chances, unless a supreme principle is to be served thereby, is egregious folly. The principle in this instance was clear enough. "Aggression," one of the best organs of French opinion had said, "ought never to come from France." The government was not actuated solely by a motive of policy in keeping its troops at a certain distance from the frontier, until Germany should fully unmask her bellicose purpose; but it obeyed the major conscience, the major will, of a peace-loving nation. Russia, Britain, and France were at one in the desire for peace, as long as it might be conserved with honour and without foolish or humiliating sacrifice.

**Need of internal reform stirs the people.** At the same time, the anti-militarism that from 1898 to 1905 had been so conspicuous a factor in the political life of the country, but was not truly representative of the love of peace, but rather of the dangerous designs of ultra-radicals and ultra-socialists, had yielded in some degree to a wiser patriotism. Statesmen of broader views and finer sympathies succeeded those who had recklessly

insisted upon agitating the nation to a fever-heat over the condemnation of a Dreyfus, as one who had traitorously dealt with the German military chiefs, and upon exalting him to the popular status of a martyr. The great need of electoral and administrative reform, rendered more and more evident by partizan abuses, engaged the best thought of the more trustworthy legislators. The sincere zeal of certain of these for the public good, among them Raymond Poincaré, subsequently chosen to the presidency of the Republic, responded to the rising tide of revived patriotism.

**German intrigue and espionage.** There is abundant cause of certainty that the anti-military and various other seditious movements in France were promoted or more or less directly encouraged by German intrigue and subordination. An ever-increasing multitude of German spies was disseminated throughout the land. Many of them engaged in trade and caused themselves to be admitted to the French allegiance as citizens. They were to be found almost everywhere, but especially in certain kinds of commerce which permitted them to mingle largely with the people and to intrude themselves under plausible pretexts even into their homes. Enormous numbers of Germans were employed in restaurants and cafés in the large cities; and every public place was infested with eavesdroppers. German servants, male and female, were employed unsuspectingly in house-



holds of men whose notable positions gave them access to the inner governmental and military and naval circles. Such servants by preference sought places in the families of army and navy officers, senators and deputies, judges and advocates, important financiers and military contractors. Germans of higher pretensions were bankers and money-brokers, speculators and investors, who tried on all occasions to gain in some degree the confidence of Frenchmen of privileged position, particularly in connection with the public defence and the railways.

**Radicalism suffers from crimes and scandals.**

Some well-known Parisian financiers allowed themselves to be besmirched by contact with these subtle enemies. The case of the banker and politician Caillaux, who became Minister of Finance and Premier, one of the principal heads of the radical party, was made notorious by the cowardly assassination by his wife of Gaston Calmette, editor of the newspaper *Figaro*, ostensibly because of the latter's supposed intention to publish some compromising documents. Before the trial of Madame Caillaux, at which her acquittal was obtained by what seemed to most observers a palpable pre-arrangement, these documents were handed by the brother of the victim to the President of the Republic. Among thousands of rumours and assertions relating to them, one was more persistently and positively repeated than

all the rest. It was to the effect that Wilhelm II. had sent to Caillaux an autograph letter, the publication whereof would either have retarded the outbreak of the Great War, or else would have prevented it altogether. The documents which had been placed in the hands of the President of the Republic were not published.

**Caillaux's intrigue with Germany.** In 1912, Caillaux, although he was then merely the Finance Minister, obtruded himself into the Franco-German negotiations concerning Morocco, and, in a certain degree, compromised the French Government, without due authority. He was the responsible cause of propositions made to unofficial representatives of the Berlin Government involving an arrangement which would have greatly benefited the holders of important concessionary rights and, with them, certain German and French bankers and financiers. A careful mystery enveloped the real origin of the Caillaux episode. The culmination of the trial of the murderess came on the very eve of the outbreak of the war, when the Government was seeking to prevent any needless agitation of the public. Caillaux had been Prime Minister for a short period, and later had again accepted the portfolio of finance. This he now resigned, in face of popular hatred and contempt, largely aroused by the crime of his wife, but due also to a widespread conviction that he had been untrue, as a statesman, to the interests of his country.

**The assassination of Jaurès.** Another tragedy

believed to be more or less due to the immission of German secret agents in the internal affairs of France took place almost simultaneously with the freeing of Madame Caillaux. Jean Jaurès, a famous socialist leader, one of the most gifted orators in France, chief of his party in the Chamber of Deputies, was assassinated, a few hours before Germany's declaration of war against Russia. The murderer was a young native of Rheims. He was found to have been much influenced by alien associates.

France, without being fully aware of it, had long been permeated by the insidious poison of German ideas and methods; and had yielded to its effects insensibly. Germans were constantly gaining ground in the control and direction of commercial and industrial enterprises. This poison had even begun to vitiate in a certain degree the French taste in art. To it were due many of the architectural monstrosities which were erected, after the beginning of the twentieth century, in Paris and other French cities. Even in the domain of painting and sculpture, the backward trend of the Germanic taste was to be recognized. Both the so-called "cubic" and "futurist" "schools" were inspired by the love of barbaric crudity.

**Fruits of Germany's system of espionage.** Where German wealth was employed, there German notions fully prevailed. Long-established business houses were gradually garrisoned, so to

speak, with German clerks. Under legal disguises German concerns obtained confidential contracts for purveying to the French Government. Even many locomotives, on French railways of immense strategic importance, were of German construction. The nonchalant tolerance of the French was astounding. Even the secrets of the aviation camps were not always sufficiently guarded, and many officers of the rival nation received instruction in them, soon after they were established. Germans bought landed property at strategical points in France and for years were allowed to occupy it unwatched. They caused to be built by labourers brought from Germany cement foundations for heavy guns in their kitchen-gardens, and these were carefully hidden with earth against the moment when invasion might render them of practical use. German spies circulated and penetrated everywhere. There were in France centres of control for the general system of espionage maintained by the Berlin Government. All these multiple activities were aptly designated by the French journals, though rather late in the day, as "the war before the war." In all the principle of "occult aggression," lauded by Treitschke, was assiduously carried out. In other countries as well German intruders elaborated a like system. The Kaiser boasted with evident sincerity: "I know all that is going on in London." The system in fact extended to every part of the

world. It seemed that no government and no important business enterprise were safe from it. The New World as well as the Old had good reason to beware of it. "Domination of trans-Atlantic centres" had been one of Treitschke's emphatic recommendations.

**French distrust and disdain of the German people.** It was characteristic of the French that they were magnanimous and considerate towards the individual German, beyond the bounds of prudence; but their distrustful and disdainful estimate of the German people as a whole never abated. There had been more than forty years of menace from Berlin; but France had never been freer from fear of the hereditary foe than she was after the threat at Agadir. A little more than two years before the Kaiser had surprised Europe by the warning that if Russia moved against the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina she would find herself confronted not only by Austria-Hungary in arms, but also by Germany. "The crisis," says Ernest Denis,<sup>1</sup> "had at least one favourable result. It gave to France, England, and Russia the opportunity to prove most positively to Germany that they did not nourish the slightest aggressive intention." By September, 1910, a most perfect harmony seemed to have been established among the five Powers, Germany,

<sup>1</sup> *La Guerre: Causes Immédiates et Lointaines; l'Intoxication d'un Peuple* (Paris, 1915).

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Russia, France, Austria, and Britain. The general political atmosphere had apparently cleared. Europe was still divided into two camps, but there was no longer the tense anxiety which had so long subsisted. It was only a few months later that Germany, true to her habit of brutal surprises, despatched her warship to Agadir. This was her characteristic response to the pacific manifestations of all the Powers that she counted as her immediate rivals. Her lack of good faith, the game of diplomatic blackmail that she was so fond of playing, were never more apparent. In Germany there was a cynical absence of any pretence of finality in the undertakings of the government with that of France; and Daniel Frymann, in a book which received semi-official sanction and attained a tremendous popularity,<sup>1</sup> declared:

We have the right to exact that the smallest syllable of the new treaty shall be sacred in the eyes of the French; if France disregards it by a single iota we shall consider it as null and void; we shall exact then our share of this empire [Morocco], and arms will decide.

This pronouncement was truly representative of the state of the directing minds in Germany. Its contrast with the pacific reasonableness of the other Powers, and most of all of France, is no less

<sup>1</sup> *Wenn Ich Kaiser Wäre.*

than shocking. Frymann's book passed through thirty editions in a few months, and that of Bernhardt on the coming Great War was its fitting pendant. The Agadir episode, if judged in the light of these and other works of the Germans, conceived with the same disregard of the time-honoured tenets of equity and decency, could not but appear most alarmingly significant.

**The heroic France of history resuscitated.** The French nation kept its composure most admirably; but the Kaiser's latest act convinced its major spirits that the German mania of aggression was nearing its crisis. It was the signal for the arousing of the old martial temper of the people, that valiant temper which had enabled Turenne, Condé, Saxe, and Bonaparte to win their undying laurels. The point beyond which peace-seeking would cease to be patriotic virtue was visible. There was no parade about this awakening in 1912, 1913, and 1914. "The gravest and most criminal error," wrote a much-heeded publicist, "would be to respond to the essential military facts which the Germans reveal to us with mere appearances." There was no need of this counsel, except among some of the wilfully obtuse politicians of the ultra-radical or the blindly socialistic type. Everywhere the common people demonstrated their cheerful readiness to undertake new sacrifices, proportionately far greater than those of the Germans, to insure the safety of the nation.

**Thus was resuscitated the heroic France of history.**

The population of Germany outnumbered that of France by twenty-five millions. In Germany only about one sixth of the number of young men who annually arrived at the military age were incorporated in the active army; in France no fewer than seven tenths. Every year rendered the relative military situation more critical for the French. The army was in excellent condition and there were thousands of Frenchmen who believed, since war was acknowledged to be inevitable, that it were far better that it should come soon than late. Meanwhile the vast majority welcomed the idea of strengthening the army by lengthening the term of service. There were constant reports of young conscripts who voluntarily engaged themselves for three years, instead of two. The adoption of this and other military reforms reacted to augment the confidence of the nation. There were many offers of self-sacrifice. Schoolmistresses, for example, sought to dissuade the budget committee of the Chamber of Deputies from increasing their stipend, in order that the country might support more easily the proposed expenditure of an unprecedented sum for military needs. The new furor for athleticism in France was a phase of the general resurgence of a more robust patriotism.

**Obtuseness of the parliamentary majority.** The wave of enthusiastic nationalism mounted higher



and higher, in the two years following 1912. Gratuitous aid was given the government for the enlargement of the aerial fleet. The people were entirely disposed to accept any burden for the national defence that could be shown to be reasonable. It did not speak well for the wisdom of the majority of the legislators that they failed then to use the utmost of their powers to put the country in readiness for the fearful trial that obviously was approaching. This strange attitude resembled very much that of the British ministers. In the spirit of her citizens France was never more ready for the conflict. Her army illustrated this fact in its zest of duty and drill; and the annual field manoeuvres were more than ever brilliant. They evoked the wonder and praise even of German tacticians. After many years the army was once more at thorough unison with the mass of the people, even as when the First Republic, defiantly conscious of its newborn strength, had stood face to face with the alien enemies of democratic liberty. Even the extreme socialists, who had been frankly opposed to the maintenance of a large active army and had sought to bring about what they termed an "international peace strike," declared themselves, when the die was cast, in complete accord with all of their countrymen in the effort for national defence, under the guidance of that same government of the middle-class which hitherto they had severely condemned. Inter-

nationalism was not, they said, a suppression of nationality, but a fraternal understanding among nations. Their leaders averred that the socialists had always had at heart the protection of their country from foreign aggression. Their contention had been that only an army of defence should be maintained, a system of militia like that in Serbia, which had proved itself of valiant worth in two heroic wars. And when the Republic's call to arms was heard these same socialists responded quite as promptly and as eagerly as did the rest of its citizens. The same was true of the royalists, of the clericals, even of the priests and monks, whom the radical ministries had outraged to the last degree. Naturally there was strong hope on the part of each of the two extremes of the opposition that Germany's defeat would advance their own particular cause. On the one hand the socialists believed that the destruction of Germanic imperialism would lead to the establishment of republics in all the Teutonic countries; on the other, the clerical reactionists were very sure that the revival of religious feeling in France would produce most important political results, for this reaction had already declared itself most impressively. The Church of Rome might well have deemed that the war was in a sense providential, since to her it seemed opportune for the bringing back of her eldest child into the Pontifical fold.

**Recrudescence of religious and moral senti-**

ment. France had suffered morally and socially from the exaggeration of the policy of divorcement of Church and State and the excessive and needless severity—an injustice politically inspired,—with which this program was carried out. Whatever were the past abuses of religion, it certainly had exercised a sane restraint upon the mass of the people, and since its direct authority had been diminished there had been an unmistakable growth of laxity in manners and in social discipline. The commencement of the war recalled the people to the temples. They returned to them, as sheep to their shelters. It was a touching and interesting spectacle—that of thousands of men and women of all classes at daily prayer. Soldiers on furlough, returning from the fighting, promptly presented themselves before the altars. The preachers were fully equal to their opportunity. Bigotry and dogma rarely spoke in their sermons, but instead a noble and sublime patriotism, a broad and sympathetic morality, like that of the great Nazarene himself. The habit of cynicism as to matters spiritual had in great part instantly lost its hold upon the people, when the danger of the country was fully realized. It seemed that within the vast family of the state a new era of charity, of common tolerance, and of common helpfulness and good-will had begun.

**Mental procrastination of French statesmen.** For more than forty years the nation had kept

itself under a firm restraint. Gambetta's counsel, however, that it was always to bear in mind the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, but never to discuss it, was not faithfully obeyed. Yet the spirit of the French attitude in relation to this question differed absolutely from that of the Germans. In the Reichstag a tone of bullying arrogance pervaded almost all the allusions to the burning scar of 1870; while those in the Parliament at Paris, although courageous and sometimes indiscreet, cannot be said to have been provocative in any conspicuous instance. Germany never tired of vaunting her monstrous armament. A few statesmen in France knew the reality of the danger which this incarnated; but the greater number had been too much preoccupied with doubtful political theories or with partizan ambitions to give the attention to it which it should have commanded. If there is one thing that France had more deeply to regret than any other, when the war-cloud burst, it was that her responsible leaders had fallen into a habit of mental procrastination regarding the ever-present issue of German injustice and German truculence and dishonest rivalry; and had placed other necessities, real and fancied, before the supreme one of national security and national prestige.

**New selection of political leaders.** The shock of the rude awakening in 1905, when the German Emperor first gave hint in positive action of his

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aggressive purpose, had prompted the French people, however, to a new and sterner scrutiny of their public men. As the sequent events leading to the extremely strained situation just preceding the Great War opened their eyes more and more to the real nature of the German pretensions, the dominant electors further showed their superior patriotism. Gradually the more dangerous and the less sincere leaders were thrust aside, until when the fated die was cast France was fortunate enough to find to her hand a set of men, trained in parliamentary and ministerial affairs, in whom she could safely trust. This culmination of a sane evolution was one of the most hopeful signs of the year 1914. There was no taint of MacMahonism, no vice of Boulangerism, in the roots of government. The epidemics of militarism, of anti-militarism, of rabid radicalism, were past. It impressed most onlookers as the opening of a moderate era, of which the country stood much in need. Already the more commanding political sense of the people was holding its course to the line of essential issues and leaving aside many of the mischievous and unessential ones. A few more years of peace, with increased vigilance as to outer dangers, would probably have seen France a great deal stronger, politically and economically, than she had ever been in all her history. This prospect was only too obvious to the Germans.

Shielded from the reckless aims and the false enthusiasm of some of her political charlatans, with a more moderate colonial ambition, and without the incessant nagging of an overbearing and treacherous neighbour, France, by her cultivation of the higher objects, the finer graces and amenities of life, might really have enjoyed a "golden age," though of a different sort from that with which the name of Saturn is linked. But in her study of the native sources of happiness, in her careful exploitation of the most favoured of all lands, in short, in her sincere devotion to the arts of peace, she was too prone to forget the dangers threatening her from without. The severe critic might even be justified in saying that she set too high a price upon peace, and that she herself in a certain degree gave to the German the excuse to look upon her as having entered on the inevitable period of decadence which awaits sooner or later every people that has subjected itself to a process of over refinement, both in mental pursuits and in epicureanism. It is even more than probable that but for the outer peril this view would have been verified within the succeeding half-century. The colonial activities of the French were not sufficient to maintain her spirit of enterprise and of fortitude at the true virile tension; and the effort normally necessary on the part of her population in the gaining of a livelihood was less than that in Germany

and many other lands. Necessity, espoused by resolution, is the real mother of national strength.

**The French virtues rational and moderate.** No better light can be shed upon the natural position of the French people in reference to the rest of the world than is afforded by that wise and conscientious writer, Ernest Denis, in his book on the Great War, published in 1915.

Nowhere on the globe [says he] is nature more kindly than in France; the climate more temperate; the contrasts less violent and less abrupt; labour easier or more fruitful. The people here attach themselves to the land with a more joyous affection than anywhere else, because it rewards the tiller's toil with an inexhaustible generosity. The smiling sun caresses the vision, and the unobtrusive odour of the fields fills the senses with a harmonious pleasure. The Frenchman rarely emigrates, because it is too painful to him to abandon so hospitable a home; he does not often lift his gaze towards the heavens, because the near horizon suffices to delight his contemplation and to satisfy his dream. He is wary of mysticism and of metaphysical speculations. The writers whom he prefers are moralists, and the virtues that he practises are rational and moderate. The only saint that he adores is Jeanne d'Arc, so simple in her heroism, and who hears no mysterious voices except the echo of the great plaint (*più*) which arises from the natal soil, trampled by the foeman. . . . The Frenchman, somewhat careless of religion, and

whose imagination grasps but feebly the idea of eternity and of the mysteries of the Beyond, much less Keltic in his temperament than he is Latin, bound to the soil by instincts most profound, with an absolute need of precision and clearness in what he may accept as knowledge, has devoted himself to rendering as agreeable as possible the few years of existence that destiny accords us. He has cultivated the social instincts and has striven to soften the relations of man to man. He has preached moderation, taste, discretion, tact. It was on French soil that tolerance had its birth; it was here too that respect for human dignity was born, respect for the individual. We dread suffering, and this teaches us indulgence and pity; we need the sympathy of our fellow-men, and this puts us upon our guard against the instincts of oppression; we love to feel ourselves in communion with other peoples, and we gladly welcome their ideas. It may happen that we do not completely understand them, but if sometimes we alter their form, the result is almost always to deprive them of whatever there is in them that is excessive or confused. We have ever been the go-between of nations. France, the great crossroads of the world, has always been above all others the country of intellectual and moral transition, the centre of the free exchange of thought. Again be it repeated, it is not a question for us of laying claim to any inborn primacy or to any providential supremacy whatever. . . . To each one his especial part in the world, and it is this harmonious effort of the genius of different peoples that has developed the grandeur of the modern civilization.



**The error of 1866 and that of 1913.** The extreme pacifists in France who talked in 1913 of renouncing Alsace-Lorraine were like Girardin and others who, when it was a question, in 1866, of destroying the primacy of Austria in the Germanic sphere, declared that the duty and interest of their country coincided with the Prussian interest. It was the fatal error which permitted the monstrous growth of the most pernicious hegemony of modern times. And the propaganda of this error meant a heavy drain upon the secret fund of Prussia's chief minister, Graf von Bismarck. A like error was that which lulled France into the cheap sense of security which is purchased by an evasion of duty to one's self.

The change which came over her when the truth was brought home was all the more remarkable. It amounted to a regeneration; and to a regeneration without throes and without convulsions. Those who were most responsible for her self-deception escaped the violent reprobation that was their due. The noble charity of opinion and of judgment evinced nearly everywhere was one of the best proofs of the moral advance of the French people, in spite of the sordid and petty political methods of some of their leaders. France, ignoring for the time all mean considerations, concentrated all of her moral and material energies upon the supernal object, the salvation of the

nation, the vindication of her claim for reparation of the wrong done to it in the peace of 1871, and the definitive overthrow of the sworn enemies of justice and civilization.

**Temperamental manifestations.** Even under the dark cloud of imminent invasion, the temperamental cheerfulness of the French could not be extinguished; yet some of its accustomed manifestations, which many critics less happily constituted regarded as frivolous, instantly disappeared. What one could remark everywhere was an intense but contained ardour for the heroic test of arms. The mobilization of the troops, although belated, in comparison with that in Germany, was marvellous in its expedition and smoothness. All the brains and nerves and muscles of France seemed to work by one impulse. It was the first convincing evidence of that "sacred unity" which seemed the certain warrant of victorious hope. Obvious, but not ostentatious, was the eagerness of the young men to go to the front. Large numbers of their elders who formed the territorial reserve manifested their deep disappointment on learning that for the present they must remain behind the lines. Paris assumed a sedate air, calm and self-contained. There was no delirium of enthusiasm, no vociferous demonstration except on the part of a few students and their associates, largely foreign, who wildly raced through the grand boulevards in public carriages,

shouting defiance to Germany and singing insulting ditties about the Kaiser.<sup>1</sup>

**The true soul of France once more revealed.** The hasty departure of the men for the front of battle, or for the dépôts where the reserve regiments were mustered, prior to receiving their definite orders; the alacrity with which they sprang to the service of their country; the quiet fortitude of the women, bidding them good-by with words of courage and confidence, even in the midst of tears; the thousands of emotional scenes in the streets; the universal unity of thought and purpose; the stoic sternness of the old men who already knew what war was and who wished in this hour of generous sacrifice that their sons also should know it; the sudden abandonment of minor, insignificant concerns for the great concern of the nation; the belittling of purely material considerations and the magnifying of the ideal: all these and many other symptoms revealed as never before since the great Revolution the true soul of France. Of course, in the midst of this splendid ecstasy of patriotism there were some extremely bitter thoughts, mostly resentful of the foolish neglect of certain essential precautions against the foe. Why had not the Franco-Belgian

<sup>1</sup> The principal of these had the refrain:

"Conspue Guillaume,  
Conspue Guillaume,  
Conspue!"

frontier been duly fortified? was a question in millions of minds. Why had France submitted so inertly to German espionage? Why was aid not sent into Belgium in time to prolong the magnificent defence of Liège and possibly to prevent the fall of Namur and Antwerp?

From the day on which mobilization was ordered, deplorable rumours concerning the French unreadiness for the war were vaguely circulated. They were unfortunately true in the main. Rifles, uniforms, accoutrements, and heavy cannon were lacking. Men were sent away from the military dépôts in droves, after having been summoned, because they could not be equipped. The spirit of the public was momentarily depressed by these facts as they gradually became known; but not its hopefulness or its courage. Its steadiness, its discipline, its ready devotion, argued better for the rôle that France was about to play in the Great War than the greatest possible display of emotional patriotism would have done.

**Tragic nature of the danger fully realized.** Yet France, after her final awakening, realized to the full the tragic nature of her peril. And she knew, too, how imperfectly she could cope with it, unless aided by powerful allies. There was almost breathless waiting upon the course which Britain should pursue. Most Britons who happened to be in France declared that it was the sacred duty of their country to intervene. Many there were

who added that if she did not they would renounce their allegiance to her. In the midst of poignant anxiety at the oncoming of the German horde, there was a moral certainty at the bottom of most minds that Britain would march with France and Russia, Serbia and Belgium; but the suspense was none the less keen. The French had frankly counted on British aid and had been confronted with Sir Edward Grey's cold reservation of "liberty of action" in behalf of his government. After events proved how much depended on this aid, both in a moral and in a material sense. Certain French statesmen knew, indeed, how almost indispensable it was to the successful combating of the Germanic monster. Yet, even so, there was no sign of moral weakness because of England's lack of promptitude in making the decision which, as it appeared to most undiplomatic observers, should have been virtually spontaneous. It was an extraordinary proof of the profound evolution that had taken place in international politics, that the French public into which had been inculcated for so many centuries a fixed hatred of "perfidious England" should now in so critical a moment manifest so calm a confidence in English good-will and her helpful sincerity. It was not wholly to be explained by the patent fact of Britain's interest, common with that of France, in putting bounds to the pretensions of the German power. A deeper reason was the

better acquaintance of the two peoples with each other; and the more general understanding in this age of the motives underlying public policy, tending to disarm prejudice where formerly, being fed by ignorance, it was strongest. German diplomacy had made no advances in method since the time of the great Frederick. While America, Britain, and France had adopted the practical principle of recognizing and sustaining the broad tenets of international right as bases of negotiation, the chief reliance of Germany and Austria-Hungary had continued to be falsehood, duplicity, intimidation. The admirable unity of the anti-German allies in the first stage of the war proved again the value of honest dealing as a foundation of respect and confidence in international as in private affairs. On the other hand, between the partners in criminal aggression, the two central empires, there was more or less friction and disputation from the moment their plans of military co-operation were first put to the practical test.

To the words used by the President of the Republic in his message to the Parliament on the 4th of August the heart of every Frenchman may be said to have vibrated in sympathetic response:

In the war which has begun France will have for her the Right, whereof no people, no more than any individual, can with impunity ignore the eternal moral force. She will be heroically defended by all

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her sons, whose sacred union before the enemy nothing can disrupt, and who are fraternally assembled today in common indignation against the aggressor and in a common patriotic faith.

And equally so to the memorable phrase of the Premier, René Viviani: "We are blameless; we shall be fearless."

## CHAPTER XI

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARTICIPATION OF JAPAN IN THE CONFLICT OF EUROPEAN POWERS

Why She strongly Desired to Oust Germany from her Foothold on the Western Shore of the Pacific—Well-Grounded Hatred Dating from the Interference with the Japanese Triumph in 1895—The Mikado's Admirable Foreign Policy, in Seeking Cordial Relations with Russia and a Practical Alliance with Britain—America's Claims to Influence in the Treatment of China a Large Element in the Situation—The Opportunity for Self-Assertion Offered her by the Germanic Aggression in Europe not to be Neglected by Japan in her Own Sphere—Her Ultimatum to Germany a Masterpiece of Justifiable Insolence—Wilhelm II.'s Characteristic Attempts to Move the Mikado's Government in his Favour by Underhand Leverage—The Question of Japanese Intervention on the European Continent—Future Problems which it Suggested.

JAPAN entered the arena of war as a satellite of Britain. There was very little of passion or of truly national feeling in her action, and quite as much of calculation as in that of Germany. Her chief aim was political and commercial expansion, with a view to complete dominance, sometime in the near future, in the Far-Eastern sphere. Incidentally she sought to emphasize to the world her right to rank as a first-



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class Power and as a thoroughly civilized people. Her immediate practical purpose, however, was to oust Germany from her foothold on the western shore of the Pacific Ocean and at the same time to wrest from China certain advantages of trade, traffic, and colonization, which would constitute a long stride in the direction of her ultimate ambition.

Japan stood in need of an outlet for her excessive energy and of added room for her teeming population. Wilhelm's warning of the "yellow peril," unduly strenuous as it seemed at the time, again forcibly presented itself to men's minds. The question of Japan's definitive relations to the great powers of the Occident, but chiefly to the United States of America, was brought perceptibly nearer.

The American possessions in the Pacific were peculiarly vulnerable to attack. Japan's victory over the Germans at Kiaochao, strengthening her claim upon the good-will of Britain, might mean within a few years, if not an amicable change in the ownership of the Philippines, then perhaps another important war. The delicate question of China's sovereign rights and of the "open door" for her commerce with the western world might even earlier embroil the United States of America with the Empire of the Mikado. Moreover, Britain, if she destroyed the German naval power, might again become over-arrogant on the high seas, as in

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the early years of the nineteenth century, until checked by salutary defeat.

**Japo-American rivalry in the Pacific.** A French publicist who may be considered as impartial wrote in the early months of 1915:

Japan and the United States of America are rivals in the Pacific. The taking of the Philippines by the Americans added a new motive of discord. It is easy to see that sooner or later Japan will seek by the force of arms to extend her population to the Pacific isles and even to the shores of America. Besides this, the United States are the most dangerous competitors of Japan in China, and it is currently asserted that they would like to make of the Pacific "an American lake." They will find their progress in these regards disputed by the Japanese power, which also is resolved to dominate that part of the world.

After the war of 1904, Japan sought more friendly relations with Russia, largely for the purpose of offsetting the American pretensions, especially as illustrated by the proposal from Washington to "internationalize" the railways of Manchuria, both those existent and those yet to be constructed. Her action in this respect harmonized completely with that whereby she later welcomed the British desire for an equal alliance.

Japan's external policy [the same publicist remarked] is a masterpiece of perseverance, continuity, and logic. She has given to the world the admirable

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spectacle of a feeble nation, menaced by stronger powers, gathering strength by intensity of effort, to safeguard her liberty, and to impose her will upon some, while from others she exacts respect. The lesser peoples may find in this example ground for an immense hope.

**Japan not obliged in this instance to support her ally.** There was nothing in the second form of the Anglo-Japanese pact, dated the 13th of July, 1911, which compelled the Mikado to enter the great struggle of 1914. It gave to the high contracting parties an extraordinary discretion in deciding whether the causes and character of any given war wherein either of them might engage demanded the intervention of the other. One of the reasons for the modification of the original formula undoubtedly was the new *rapprochement* between Russia and Britain. The latter did not wish to be bound to attack Russia merely because Japan might determine to do so on ground that might appear to her to be plausible. Nor did Britain wish to be dragged into an aggressive war with the United States of America, with no overpowering interest therein.

The possibility of a Japo-American conflict had apparently been increased by the sharp anti-immigration measures illegally taken by the State of California, and which caused a considerable irritation at Tokio. It was significantly recalled by the Japanese in 1914 that the foremost leader

of the anti-Japanese movement in California was a Mayor of San Francisco of Germanic origin and that he had been received in audience by Wilhelm II. in Berlin in 1908; further, that the Kaiser had then boasted that he "would oppose the Anglo-Japanese alliance with a German-American-Chinese league."<sup>1</sup> The Root-Takahira agreement at the end of that year was the death of this scheme.

But the problem of the overflow of the Asiatic peoples into other continents touched the government of the British Empire only one degree less intimately than it did that of the United States. The people of the British dominions of Canada, Australasia, and South Africa were almost as bitterly hostile to the competition of Chinese and Japanese with Caucasian labour as were the people of the western States of America. Besides, in no case would one of the parties to the Anglo-Japanese agreement have been compelled, by either a technical or a moral interpretation of its terms, to support the other in a war against a nation to which it stood already obligated by a treaty of arbitration.

**An occasion that Japan could not afford to miss.** It was the most excellent occasion that Japan could have desired for the suppression of the uncompromising and essentially disloyal rivalry of

<sup>1</sup> Article signed by "Imperialist," in the *Fortnightly Review* (London), June, 1915.

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Germany in the China trade and in Chinese affairs in general. She could not afford to let it pass, even though her own people were murmuring with increasing discontent under their economic burdens, even though the government was in great need of funds, and even though recent disclosures of administrative corruption, particularly in the navy, had caused a dangerous and most humiliating scandal. Indeed, these facts furnished only another reason for the Mikado's determination to win fresh glory for his arms by land and sea, by attacking Germany, the newest intruder from the western hemisphere in the eastern.

Various motives entered into the Japanese dislike of the Germans and their ways. Japan had made use of German means of instruction, as had Turkey; but she was not prone, as was the latter, to allow this to be the first step towards an unworthy and humiliating tutelage. The Japanese had fully proved their capacity for learning as much of modern wisdom abroad as was possible, and then of assimilating it to their own particular purposes. The small influence that the Germans acquired in their public affairs tended chiefly to warn them against a further yielding to it. The Japanese could not easily forget that Kaiser Wilhelm as an amateur artist had painted Saint George as the Prussian national champion in the act of crushing the so-called yellow race, incarnate in the form of a foul and fearsome dragon.

**Characteristic German turpitude.** And the characteristic turpitude of German commercialism was easily detected as one of the primal causes of the Japanese naval scandal. German purveyors had been so powerful as to effect the displacement of officers who were hostile to their dishonest proceedings, and by unmitigated bribery had obtained a certain control over the internal working of the admiralty office. Japanese statesmen were besides aware that "the trail of the German venom," as an English writer put it, "could be traced throughout the Chinese foreign policy" during the entire twenty years which had elapsed since the war which had settled the naval supremacy of the Far East. This venom was injected into the Chinese body-politic after the leasing of Kiaochao in larger doses than before, until it seemed now only a question of time, if peace were to continue in the Japo-Chinese sphere, as to the complete domination by Germany of the economic development, not alone of the Shantung province, but of the whole of the eastern part of the Empire, south of the Gulf of Pechili.

**China influenced by Teutonic diplomacy.** Yung-Shih-Kai, the President-Dictator of the so-called Chinese republic, appears to have been captivated by an autograph letter sent to him by the German Kaiser, after the commencement of the European war, and in replying to it expressed a very high admiration for German science and *Kultur*.

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The details of Admiral von Hintze's diplomatic mission at Peking, after the reduction of Kiaochao by the Japanese, were ample confirmation of the disposition deeply implanted in the Chinese Government by German diplomatic machinations to favour Germany to the utmost rather than do anything that might redound to the advantage of the Island Empire, however logical or however legitimate that advantage might be. The Mikado's counsellors had not waited until then to learn of this disposition. They had long felt that nothing short of war could cure the vice of German intrusion in the politics of the Far East. The situation required an heroic remedy, just as had the Russian incubus in Manchuria in 1904, when Tokio suddenly ruptured the much-knotted thread of peaceful relationship with Saint Petersburg.

The ultimatum of Japan to Germany in August, 1914, was a masterpiece of justifiable insolence. It enjoined upon Germany the immediate withdrawal or disarmament of those of her warships which were in Chinese and Japanese waters, as their presence there was considered as a menace to peace; and the evacuation within thirty days of the territory of Kiaochao, which the Kaiser had so carefully chosen as a footing of vantage from which to dominate the Gulf of Pechili and the Yellow Sea. Its strategic importance had already been accentuated by making it the terminus of a system of railways, in being or in prospective,

which should ultimately insure to the Germans a monopoly of the traffic of the entire region of the eastern coast, from the vicinity of Peking southward, almost, if not quite, to Canton; in fact, to the border of the British zone.

**Bitter satisfaction of Japanese statesmen.** Upon these premises, one can readily understand the kind of bitter satisfaction which the Japanese statesmen must have felt in thus "turning the tables" upon the arrogant and presumptuous Power which had helped to debar their own nation, twenty years before, from the full gaud of its victories, and which later had given every evidence of its hatred as well as its fear of the elder peoples of the East. The seizure of Kiaochao<sup>1</sup> was indeed a fine commentary upon Germany's refusal at that epoch, conjointly with Britain, to permit Japan to retain the province of Liaotung! Nor could the Japanese forget the base cruelty of the Germans in the Shantung district, in execution of the Kaiser's express commands, one of the chief provocatives of the "Boxer" uprising. They knew that, given the same opportunity, Germany would be only too

<sup>1</sup> Kiaochao was occupied by the Germans in 1897, after two missionaries had been assassinated by the natives. "China, affrighted, yielded all that was demanded of her; but this did not prevent the Germans from behaving towards the population with such brutality that Shantung became the centre of the insurrectional movement of 1900 on the part of the 'Boxers' against all Europeans resident in the country."



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eager to treat them in the same or a worse manner. Probably Japan, more than any of the European nations, had taken the true measure of Germany as a social, moral, and political entity. She was prompt to assume towards her, in a limited sphere, something of the rôle of an inexorable Nemesis. She lost no time in severing the fine thread upon which was suspended Germany's glittering hope of erecting for herself a Far-Eastern dominion. The shock<sup>1</sup> to Wilhelm II. and the astonishment of the Berlin Government would have been ludicrous had it not been for the deeply tragic shadow which was darkening the entire world.

**A new element in the international system.** The initiative of Japan as against Germany raised many questions which were to figure largely in the international policies of the future. It really amounted to the introduction of a new element in the general international system. Prior to that the power of Japan had never been exercised out-

<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Hanotaux: "Germany had established herself deliberately in the heart of the international interests of the Far East, face to face with Japan, in competition with her for the commercial exploitation and the political domination of China." She had made prodigious efforts for the creation of a "Gibraltar" at Kiaochao, as a base for the eventual conquest of northern China. A system of railways to penetrate into the vast interior of China was inaugurated, and a syndicate was established to exploit the "hinterland" of Shantung. Germany schemed to control the south-eastern outlet of the Siberian railway, and at the same time to make the port of Kiaochao a rival to Hong-Kong.

side of the strictly Far-Eastern sphere. What were now to be the limits of her influence? In this problem the United States of America were as greatly concerned as any other nation, perhaps even more so in its ultimate significance. It made more urgent the determination of the mastery of the Pacific, because in opening the way to Japan for further intimate arrangements with European governments other than Britain it rendered appreciable the possibility of combinations which might offer her greater inducements for the excessive increase of her naval force. For America, in relation to her own far-reaching interests, the Great War had a manifold meaning.

Wilhelm II.'s alarm at the Japanese ultimatum had manifested itself characteristically in an attempt to corrupt the Mikado into a betrayal of Britain, as he had tried to corrupt Britain into betraying Belgium, France, and Russia. He offered a treaty of peace upon Japan's own conditions, provided that she would respect the German possession of Kiaochao and would turn her arms against Russia. He supposed the Mikado to be as capable as himself of violating solemn engagements.

**Scornful rebuke to the Kaiser.** The Mikado's government made the same response as had those of Britain and France, when German diplomacy had endeavoured by sly means to destroy the Triple Entente.

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You deceive yourself greatly [said the Japanese Emperor] in believing that Japan can commit a crime that would be comparable to the violation of Belgian neutrality. The day when the last support of German *Kultur* in the Far East shall fall will be the most glorious one in Japanese history.

And in the national Assembly, Baron Katou declared in the name of the government that Japan "owed it to herself to be faithful to her word."

At the beginning of Japan's participation in the war, the question of her sending land and sea forces to Europe to aid the anti-Teuton allies was not practically raised. But discussion of the subject then and later brought from the Mikado's government favourable intimations. Obviously it was not for Japan to offer such reinforcement. It was for the Western allies to ask for it, if it were required.

**Japan's possible compensation.** The criterion would partly be necessity; but partly also the nature and extent of the compensation which Japan might gain thereby. There could have been no reasonable expectation that she would give of her blood and her treasure out of simple and sheer altruism, in a general cause so far removed from her own concerns. And it was hardly possible to see how any adequate reward could be offered her by the Western allies that would not involve an encroachment upon the recognized rights of China or of the United States of America or of both.

History is full of examples of the reluctance of victorious powers to give up or to restore what once they have taken from their weaker neighbours. Japan's good offices in ridding China of the German intruders were a future menace almost as much as a present advantage (perhaps even more so) in the view of the rulers at Peking, and also indeed of many sagacious observers in various parts of the world.

In treating of this matter of territorial or commercial compensation to Japan upon the Asiatic continent, the fact could not be ignored that America was morally pledged by its past policy, which was eminently justified by some of its most important interests, to object most strenuously to any attempt by external forces to dismember China or to bind her unduly in political or commercial shackles.

**Freedom of action in China impossible.** A French author, writing after the taking of Kiaochao by the Japanese, said:

It is impossible to accord to Japan freedom of action in China, for she would immediately run counter to the will of the United States of America, between whom and herself there exist already too many motives of discord.

Meanwhile, in spite of assurances from Tokio to the contrary, it was considered by most diplomats that Kiaochao and the contiguous territory,

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once in the hands of Japan, would remain there indefinitely in defiance of every claim which China could put forward for their restoration to her sole sovereignty. The discussion of the compensation to be given Japan extended not only to German East Africa, and the German islands in the Pacific, but also to the French colony of Indo-China and the northern half of the island of Saghalin, which Russia had retained with some difficulty after the war of 1904; but the objections raised to all these suggestions seemed fatal. German East Africa was considered too distant from Japan; the Pacific islands were too insignificant in the economic sense and their occupation, besides, would awaken mistrust on the part of the Australasian colonies and the United States; and the cession of Indo-China would not only be regarded by the French as an undue sacrifice, but would be displeasing to Britain,

who would view with a jealous eye the installation of an ambitious and enterprising maritime nation in proximity to her East-Indian Empire, the more so as the Siamese army was already commanded by Japanese officers; while by the United States this change of territorial ownership would be interpreted also as a menace to their peaceful possession of the Philippines.

Finally the Japanese could hardly look upon the acquisition of the northern half of the inhospitable

island of Saghalin, even if Russia were willing, as of very great importance.

**Some element of reality in the "yellow peril."**

There was also the question whether in a general sense it would be politic to invite or even to permit the Japanese to figure practically as a military factor on the continent of Europe or in European waters. Those in Western lands who were in the habit of carefully scrutinizing the horizon of the future asked what might be the consequences of such an innovation. Despite the absurdly exaggerated expression which Wilhelm II. had given some years before the war of his dread of the "yellow peril," his sincerity in that respect could not be doubted, and there was an element of potential truth in his premises and deductions which wise men did well to ponder seriously. It must be owned that Japan's national pride and her consciousness of her importance had been greatly swollen by her lucky successes in the Russian war, against a foe who was unprepared, misdirected, and cheated and betrayed in his own camp. Military commentators now know that Japan could not probably have won in the land operations of that war if Russia had but persisted in her resistance at Moukden for some time longer, her adversary being in the end quite as exhausted as she was. But in weighing the proposal that Japan should be asked to send an army to fight Germany and Austria-Hungary on European soil the danger

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of further stimulating her military self-conceit was naturally taken into account. Fortunately, as it appeared, the Mikado's statesmen were less inspired by this conceit than were the mass of his people, and they commented upon the proposal with becoming modesty.

Japan's aspirations were more immediately in the direction of a bettering of her economic situation than of political aggrandizement.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE AUSTRO-ITALIAN QUESTION AND THE ENTRANCE OF ITALY INTO THE GREAT WAR

Following that of Turkey, it nevertheless was earlier Indicated by Pre-Existing Conditions—Italy's Diplomatic Course at once most Prudent and most Honourable—Not Bound by the Treaties of the Triple Alliance to Support Austria-Hungary and Germany in Aggressive Warfare—Nor did her Interest Lie in the Destruction of the Slavic Power and the Increase of the Germanic Power in the Balkans—The Triple Alliance had almost always Worked to her Dis-advantage—Her Adhesion to it chiefly Due Primarily to Jealousy and Distrust of France—Resentment at the French Seizure of Tunisia—Her Later Cultivation of Cordial Relations with France and Britain—Umbrage Taken by Germany and Austria-Hungary at her Conservative Rise—Its Menace to their own Excessive Ambitions—She Was Ignored by them in their Arbitrary Steps against the Liberties of the Balkan Peoples—Austria-Hungary's Hostility to Italy during the Latter's War with Turkey—Gradually the Triple Alliance Becomes an Intolerable Yoke for the Italian Nation—A Passive Share in the Interference, Engineered by the Germanic Powers, with the Peace Settlement in the Balkans—The Ridiculous Makeshift of a New German Dynasty in Albania—Italy Patiently Awaited the Moment when she could Demand from Austria-Hungary the Cession of the "Unredeemed" Provinces—The Long Negotiation which Permitted her to Remedy her Unreadiness for War—Her Military and Financial Difficulties—Austria-



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Hungary finally Offers Part of the Trentino and a Slight, but Unstrategical Rectification of Boundary—Italy Insisted upon the Reconstitution of the Frontiers of the Italian Kingdom of 1811 and the Erection of Trieste and Istria into an Independent State—The Roman Government Declares its Treaty of Alliance with the Hapsburg Government Null and Void.

**Culpability of the Great Powers.** Since the early days of classical history the peoples of the three peninsulas of Italy, Greece, and Thrace, together with those of the western and northern parts of Asia-Minor, have largely influenced one another in their political, social, and commercial tendencies. But it was economic interests, more than any other, that were the cause of the many wars which raged in those regions, from the siege of Troy downward. Even that epic struggle was fundamentally due to the presumption of a single nation in seeking to maintain a monopoly of privilege in regard to the navigation of the marvellous passage between the Ægean and the Pontic Sea. That question was the focus of the problem of the Near-East which vexed Europe for the greater part of a century and a half. To avoid the dangers, real and imaginary, attending its solution, European diplomacy vacillated, pettifogged, stultified itself, chicaned, and through weakness and cowardice repeatedly covered itself with dishonour through several generations. Looking back over the seemingly interminable jumble of inconsistent,

irresolute, foolish, short-sighted, time-serving negotiations, hypocritical resolves, empty menaces, halting half-measures, makeshift pretexts and pretences, criminal negligences, factitious spasms of horror and protest, timid retrogressions for which the Great Powers were responsible from the period of the Crimean War to the entry of Turkey into the conflict of 1914, it is almost impossible to believe that such things could be, in an age of professed political enlightenment and of humane refinement. The Great Powers, chiefly Britain, Austria, and France, were guilty of most of the tergiversation which prolonged the chronic malady and the slow agony of "the Sick Man of Europe,"<sup>1</sup> as the Turkish Empire, politically incarnate in its Sultan, was termed by a celebrated ruler. Russia played a secondary part in the administration of palliative remedies because she desired most of all the timely dissolution of the patient. Germany joined the council of self-interested physicians only after the short-lived treaty of San Stefano was signed, and was then actuated apparently only by the fear that Russia might wax too great in the European sphere, and not by any mere desire to keep the Eastern Question open for ulterior purposes of her own.

**Germany's chosen hour.** Then came the period,

<sup>1</sup> The favourite comment of Thiers on this subject was: "Turkey may die, but her corpse will infect Europe with its odour for fifty years."

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however, as we have seen, when Bismarck's<sup>1</sup> disdain of the Balkans and of Asia-Minor as factors to influence the outward policy of the Empire had lost its authority: had been replaced, in fact, by the third Kaiser's creed of adventure and the eager expansive pressure of the pan-Germanic party. Germany thenceforth did her utmost to prevent the Gordian knot in Near-Eastern politics from being cut except in her desired fashion and at her chosen hour.

The fashion and the hour sprang into relief a few weeks after the Great War of 1914 was begun. Why and how Turkey came to range herself upon the side of the Germanic empires, and against France and Britain which had done the most to extenuate her crimes and to prevent her sudden undoing, is a subject inextricably involved in the development of the interrelations of the Balkan states and again of their relations with Turkey and the Great Powers. For fourteen months after the first declaration of war in August, 1914, the burning enigma for all the world was the future action of Bulgaria, Greece, and Rumania with reference to their belligerent neighbours.

**The Balkans and Italy.** Meanwhile, another of the Great Powers had entered the lists. Italy was the eighth nation to declare war against the central despotisms. In spite of the complexity

<sup>1</sup> Bismarck declared that the Eastern Question was "not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier."

and ever-varying uncertainty of the Balkan situation, it was Italy whose attitude and future course with regard to the Great War had commanded, of all the nations which until then had remained neutral, the greatest interest and had excited the liveliest conjecture.

The story of Italy's diplomatic course, from the time that the Austrian designs against Serbia were disclosed to her until the declaration of war by the Vienna Government, on the 28th of July, 1914, does much honour to her spirit of nationalism and to the honest and loyal principles which guided her external policy. Long after it was clear to all the world that her real interests lay entirely in the opposite direction, she remained faithful, as a member of the Triple Alliance, to her engagements to Austria-Hungary and Germany, and her conduct was in sharp contrast to their own perfidy and tortuous duplicity.

**Logical grounds of Italy's attitude.** Italy [wrote Francis Charmes, the French academician], is at once a very old and a very young nation, whose long-cherished aspirations are in part realized and in part remain in abeyance; and who is endowed with too fine and too supple a political sense, and at the same time too firm a will, not to follow, attentively, the course of events with the resolve to seize the opportune moment to profit by them.

This characterization was fully justified. Italy's declaration that, by the explicit terms of the Triple

Alliance, she was under no obligation to join or to support Germany and Austria-Hungary in the war which was of their making, was based upon much more logical grounds even than the obviously aggressive nature of the latter's action. In the treaties which made Italy a member of the Triple Alliance there was the broad reservation of principle which must find its place in every sound treaty, that which safeguards essentially the self-interest of each of the contracting parties.

**Why Italy entered the Austro-German group.** For Italy to aid in the destruction of the Slavic states and in the further increase of the Austro-German power in the Balkans would have been to place herself at a present disadvantage, relative to her allies, to prepare for herself a greater disadvantage in the future, and to invite checks, embarrassments, and humiliations which could only have been surmounted or effectively counteracted by an ultimate appeal to arms. Face to face with this prospect, she could not afford to temporize longer with the growing crisis of her national life. The situation which confronted her when Austria-Hungary, prompted by Germany, deliberately kindled the European conflagration, was not of sudden creation. The two Central Empires had never as yoke-fellows been thoroughly agreeable to her. She would never, probably, have submitted herself to this trammel, if her relations with other nations which ought to have been her

friends had not unfortunately become more or less embroiled, through misconceptions and misrepresentations, as well as through imprudently selfish policies on their part.

**View of Guglielmo Ferrero.** Guglielmo Ferrero wrote in 1915:

This war, in a strict accounting, is only the fated outcome of the Triple Alliance. Like so many other conceptions of Bismarck, the Triple Alliance was artificial, forced, grotesque, because at bottom it was an effort to unite, not accordant interests, but a bundle of rivalries, past, present, and future, which annulled one another reciprocally. The exaggerated authority which success had conferred upon Bismarck, and the lack of vigour in the Austrian and Italian governments, had been the cause of its continuance for thirty-two years, notwithstanding the paradoxical contradictions to which it constrained them. At the first serious shock to which it is subjected, it is demolished. To have dissolved the alliance before the war would perhaps have been well, even for Germany and Austria, who, knowing that they could not count on either the aid or the neutrality of Italy, would probably have proceeded with greater prudence and would not so lightly have provoked the tremendous catastrophe.

**Estrangement from France.** The fear of isolation had partly been the motive of Italy's entry into the Austro-German alliance; the persistence of prejudices and latent animosities prevented her

seeking the friendship of France, which together with that of either Britain or Russia could alone have saved her from such isolation, in the event of her withdrawal from the alliance. The motives of mutual distrust between France and Italy were not violent, but were profound, because they had to do with the most cherished interests of both.

**Motives of Napoleon III.** It is true that there was the historic bond of service and of comradeship produced by the wars of liberation and unification in Italy. This bond was a popular one, but for the governing class it had comparatively little practical significance. Then, too, the Italian people early understood that the aid given them by the French under Napoleon III. was almost entirely due to sheer motives of statecraft, wherein doctrinaire nationalism had a merely ostensible part. Napoleon III. helped in a degree to erect and to solidify the Italian monarchy; but his two purposes conflicted with each other: he wished to figure also as the indispensable stay of the temporal power of the Pope. The indolence and presumption of French diplomacy, at the moment when Bismarck was manœuvring to entrap the Second Empire in an unequal war, forfeited the support of Victor Emmanuel II., who was only too glad that he was not obliged to record his formal refusal of it until after he had been able to estimate the superior chance of German victory. But for the downfall of the Empire the consummation of

Italian unity by the occupation of the papal domain might not have been possible, except at the cost of a costly rupture with France. The opportunity which that downfall afforded was seized by irredentists and the dynasty with great avidity. Clerical sentiment was still exceedingly strong in France and the cause of the Pope was much nearer to the hearts of the mass of the people than was that of Italian nationalism. France thought that Italy, out of simple gratitude, ought to have come to her aid as against the German invaders; and the French Catholics held that she ought to have respected the remnant of temporal power which was in the hands of the Papacy when the war of 1870 began.

**France in the Mediterranean and in North Africa.** Subsequently, when France was beginning to rise from the state of abasement imposed upon her by Wilhelm I. and Bismarck, her enterprising policy regarding Northern Africa and the Mediterranean produced in Italy a natural resentment and a degree of apprehension for the future, such as no proud and self-respecting people could patiently endure.

When France, entering upon her course of colonial expansion, seized Tunisia in face of Italy's ardent desire to possess it, the tension between them might easily have culminated in war. Bismarck was all the time slyly promoting the mutual distrust of France and Italy, as well as



a coincident coldness between Italy and England. The latter's professed friendship for Italy had never been based upon anything more than the desire to create in the Mediterranean a rival to France; and as the Italian marine power was strengthened, the friendship naturally lessened. This effect became more and more apparent when, after the formation of the Triple Alliance, the German menace steadily increased.<sup>1</sup>

**Germany perfidiously tempted Italy.** Bismarck had lured Italian statesmen with talk of the probable acquisition by their country of the Austrian Tyrol; of her future establishment in Albania and Northern Africa; and of the possibility of her regaining Nice, Savoy, and Corsica. It may be seen that the habit of German diplomacy of offering to one power what was in the possession of a third, and without the prior consent of the latter, did not have its true origin in the reign of Wilhelm II. Bismarck's flattery and his appeal to Italian fears were effective. The adhesion of Italy to the Austro-German Alliance prospectively immobilized a large part of the French army on the defensive line of the Alps, in the event of a new Franco-German war, or of a war between Russia and Austria, or Russia and Germany. The step was also in some degree due to the personal antipathy of King Humbert to France. Crispi, the Italian premier, made himself a kind of satellite

<sup>1</sup> Ferrero.

of Bismarck; and it was only after the former's fall in 1896 that the Triple Alliance began to wear a countenance less menacing to Europe at large. Italy, from then onward, and especially after the accession of Victor Emmanuel III. to the throne and his marriage with Princess Helena, daughter of King Nicholas of Montenegro, regarded it chiefly as a counterpoise to the Russo-French alliance, and hence in a great measure as a guaranty of peace. She thenceforth cultivated good relations with France and Russia, and entered into a cordial understanding with the former and with Britain regarding the control of the Mediterranean.

France, Britain, and Italy, in spite of the jealous intrigues of the Central Powers, were able to agree as to their respective interests in Northern Africa: Britain retaining Egypt, Morocco being granted to France, and Italy taking Tripoli.

**Austro-German umbrage at Italy's rise.** Italy's motive in renewing her adhesion to Austro-German pact for the fourth time in 1912 was purely negative; and in many of the chancelleries of Europe it was the cause of considerable surprise. She had never reaped the slightest concrete advantage from the alliance, but had been constantly treated by its other members with scant regard for her dignity and interests, and always by implication, when not openly, as if her rank were secondary to theirs. The gradual evolution of her political and material fortune and the concomitant

growth of her national self-esteem tended to estrange her from them, rather than to emphasize the theoretical mutuality of aims among the three associates. Thus it was that Germany and Austro-Germany saw Italy's conservative rise, slow and laborious as it was, with something approaching to umbrage. They were by no means willing that she should become the equal of themselves. Such equality would surely have meant future opposition to their exclusive ambitions in the Adriatic, in the Balkan Peninsula, and on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. In the next few years, indeed, such opposition developed, partly active and partly passive.

Italy's treatment of other nations had been marked by scrupulous correctness of form, and, except perhaps in the case of Abyssinia (an error which was tragically punished in the disaster of Adowa) by a faithful adherence to the general principles of international justice.<sup>1</sup> Temperamentally and morally her statesmen were for the most part of a different class to that of the Bismarcks and Buelows of Prussia and the Andrassys and Aerenthals of Austria-Hungary. Her interest in the Adriatic and in the countries on its eastern shore was obviously of the first importance. Her

<sup>1</sup> "With regard to her foreign politics modern Italy has invariably proved herself faithful to her alliances. She has also shown herself more faithful to her friends than . . . those professing friendship have been to her."—RICHARD BAGOT, *The Italians of To-day*.

statesmen could not with impunity neglect the maintenance of an approximate balance of extraneous influences in the Balkans.

**The advantage always to the Central Powers.** There is nothing in the known record of Italian diplomacy to show that she would have engaged in an arbitrary and unmoral partition of the Balkan territories between herself and her allies. In any event, it never appeared that Austria-Hungary would have allowed to Italy a proportionate share of the proceeds of such joint aggression. According to their set policy, although contrary to the terms of the alliance, the main advantage was always to be with the Central Powers, not only in any action taken in that region, but also in any operations of the sort affecting Asia-Minor, Lybia, and the Levant in general.

Austria-Hungary, abetted by Germany, consummated the enslavement of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 without tendering to Italy any compensation, to correct the consequent disturbance of the Balkan equipoise. Indeed, Austria-Hungary entered upon this adventure without even informing Italy of her purpose, and the latter first knew of it when announcement was made as of an accomplished fact. Bismarck had wittingly prepared this very *dénouement* at the Berlin Congress of 1878.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Treaty of Berlin was a veritable crime against the rights of nations: it was the triumph of Germanism."—J. AULNÉAU, *La Turquie et la Guerre*.

Austria-Hungary with his approval had demanded even then the right to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina; and she accepted the formal custody of them as a definitive recognition of her claim. It was fully expected that she would seek to satisfy this claim sooner or later.

**Seventh article of the Triplice Treaty.** These antecedent facts, however, could not vitiate the seventh article of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance, which Austria-Hungary directly and deliberately violated. In that article it was explicitly provided that any one of the high contracting parties intending to effect a change in the territorial or political status of the Balkan countries must so inform the other high contracting parties in advance, whereupon the definite settlement of the compensation to be allowed to one or both of them must at once be taken in hand.<sup>1</sup>

**Germany herself coveted Lybia.** Although Austria-Hungary acted in 1908 and again in 1914 as if this article did not exist, she took exactly the opposite diplomatic course in 1911 when Italy attacked Turkey. By her conduct at that time she unquestionably hastened the evolution of Italian public opinion, that had long been in progress, regarding the real nature of the Triple Alliance. Germany's hope of obtaining by Turkish complaisance the very part of the North-African coast which Italy now had seized had been more

<sup>1</sup> *Italian Green Book*, 1915.

or less obscurely known to Italian diplomats. The "splendid strategic port of Tobruk" was especially coveted.<sup>1</sup> For Germany, it would have been an inexpugnable foothold in the basin of the Mediterranean. In rendering it impossible for Germany to get it, Italy performed a service not only to France, but to England and Spain.

**Bismarck's offer of Tunisia in 1878.** The moment was ripe for Italy to break away from the paralysing dominance of her northern allies. But her action was to them a startling surprise. Hardly yet out of the constructive period, which had begun with Cavour's leadership, she had until then been consistently tolerant, modest, amiable, and patient in her relations with other nations. She had stifled her jealousy over the success of the French in getting a permanent hold upon Morocco, a brilliant sequel to their acquisition of Tunis, in 1881, resentment of which had hardly yet died. Now the increased consciousness of her own strength as well as her enhanced dignity forbade her to be longer a dupe or a tool. She might have obtained Tunisia at the time of the Berlin Congress if she had been willing to serve Bismarck's ends, who wanted to placate her for the wrong done to her by the gift of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary and the placing of Cyprus in British hands. She feared then to invite the enmity of France, who was still smarting under her abandon-

<sup>1</sup> Bagot.

ment in 1870. For so young a nation, united Italy had suffered many disillusiones. The offer of Bismarck, backed not only by his own government, but by Austria-Hungary and Russia, had seemed almost to constitute for her a lien upon Tunisia, which she might render operative at will. She was resolved to indulge in no further self-deception. Delays became more and more dangerous, if her heart were set on colonial and maritime growth. Her eyes were opened to the political and moral obliquity of her two nominal partners.

**Austro-German "Drang nach Osten."** Austria-Hungary had ended her military occupation of the district of Novi-Bazar and had renounced her right to police the coast of Montenegro, and to deny to the latter the possession of war-ships, under the mandate<sup>1</sup> of the Berlin Congress; but these plausible concessions did not really balance the change that had been wrought in the status of the Balkan provinces. The narrow Novi-Bazar district, lying between Serbia and Montenegro, had been given up by Austria-Hungary simply because of an alteration in the permanent plan of her military chiefs,<sup>2</sup> for the traversing of the Balkans in order to form a direct territorial connec-

<sup>1</sup> Article XXIX. of the Berlin Treaty.

<sup>2</sup> Austria-Hungary retroceded the district of Novi-Bazar to Turkey, and declared that this fact was a proof of her pacific purpose. "The concession was only apparent. In fact, if Austria had meant to renounce her advance on Constantinople, she would not have retroceded the *sandjak*. It is a mountainous

tion with Turkey and to attain the Ægean Sea at Salonica. The Serbian plain offered a more practical and less precarious route. Thus early, and even earlier, in fact, was implied the eventuality of a war with Serbia as well as with Montenegro, as unavoidably incident to the "Drang nach Osten," the haunting political obsession of the German mind.

**Interference in Italy's war against Turkey.** Surprised by the one-sided Italo-Turkish War, and astounded by the speedy triumph of their self-willed ally, who thus, without consulting or heeding them, was paying them in kind for the wrongs and slights, which she had suffered at their hands, Germany and Austria-Hungary perceived for the first time that Italy was at last disposed to act upon her own estimate of her rights and opportunities. It was a shock to their secure confidence in the fair fortune of their cunning diplomacy, that the Cinderella of the Triple Alliance should behave in so audacious a manner to their other coadjutor and tool, the Ottoman monarchy. The Elder Sisters betrayed their anger. They vetoed Italy's proposed naval operations on the coast of Epirus.<sup>1</sup> Austria declared that Italy

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country, into which no army can venture."—J. AULNEAU, *La Turquie et la Guerre*.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Abruzzi had already successfully begun these operations by a battle fought at Prevesa; but his fleet was withdrawn, upon Austria-Hungary's protest.

"Count Aehrenthal declared, 5th November, 1911, 'that action



would have to deal with her, if she did not desist; and later Aerenthal also forbade an attack upon any of the Turkish coasts, "as contrary to the treaty of the Triple Alliance." It would be permitted, he said, by neither Austria nor Germany. Further, in April, 1912, the Central Powers rebuked Italy for a naval attack made near the mouth of the Dardanelles. Aerenthal indirectly threatened a rupture of the alliance, so far as Italy was concerned, and warned her that further attack upon Turkey-in-Europe, or any attempt upon the islands of the Ægean Sea, might have "grave consequences."

**Austria was prepared to invade Italy.** Austria, traditionally the political "dog in the manger," showed her teeth to Italy at this epoch exactly as she had done to Serbia in 1908 and 1909, when the latter objected to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and as later she was to do when it was a question of the ownership or possession of the

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by Italy against the Ottoman (*sic*) coasts of Turkey, or against the islands of the Ægean Sea, could not be permitted either by Austria-Hungary or by Germany, because it would be contrary to the treaty of alliance.' . . . 'Aerenthal considers the bombardment of ports of Turkey-in-Europe, such as Salonika, Kavalla, etc., as contrary to Article VII.' In 1912 our squadron was at the mouth of the Dardanelles, and, having been bombarded by the forts of Kum-Kalessi, retorted by successfully attacking those forts. Count Berchtold deplored what had happened and added that if the Italian Government desired to resume its liberty of action the Austrian Government would do the same."—*Italian Green Book*, Document 22.

Albanian coast. The scope of the Italo-Turkish War, therefore, was never what it would have been, if Italy had felt strong enough to rupture the Triple Alliance, then and there. Germany and Austria did what they could to embarrass her, without actually assuming the defence of Turkey. Austria, indeed, went to the length of preparing even to invade Italy, in face of the latter's timely preparation to protect her frontier. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand was for war, and General Hoetzendorff, chief of the Austrian staff, did his utmost, under the prince's inspiration, to bring this about. The old Emperor, however, disapproved of the venture, and relieved Hoetzendorff of his functions.

**The foundation of German influence in Turkey.** The joint diplomacy of Germany and Austria-Hungary had laid the foundations of their future preponderant influence at Constantinople; but for a time their ally's assault upon Turkey had put them entirely out of countenance. Prussia's efforts to gain a hand in Turkish affairs antedated the formation of the German Empire. Even as early as 1840, Moltke was one of two officers sent to Asia-Minor to prepare plans for a German penetration of that region by means of railway-building. Moltke himself, the future strategist of 1870, proposed the establishment of a German principality in Palestine. The economist Rocher wrote in 1848 that Asia-Minor ought some day to

fall to the lot of Germany, and upon this Friedrich List made the comment:

It would be possible by peaceful conquest to create a new Germany in that part of the world, which in greatness, population, and wealth would serve as a solid bastion to old Germany against pan-Slavism, the Russian peril.

In spite of the aversion of Bismarck from intermeddling in the East, German diplomacy made continual progress at Constantinople, and this was much accelerated after Wilhelm II. had driven him from power. The first German mission for the reorganization and training of the Ottoman army was headed by Von der Goltz in 1882. Simultaneous with the work of making the Turkish military power in a sense subservient to German ideas, and hence to German ambitions, was that of acquiring a great and greater economic hold upon the country. One of its chief developments, as indicated in a former chapter, was the great project of the Bagdad Railway, which was designed to be eventually as active a means of transit between the waters of the Mediterranean and those of the Indian Ocean as was the Suez Canal. Germany contrived to produce in Turkish governmental spheres an impression of generous friendliness and of immense capacity for evil and for good, generating a sentiment of implicit dependence as well as of exaggerated respect, while striving al-

ways to impute to the other Powers which wished to share in the economic exploitation of Asia-Minor, of which an enormous expansion was foreseen, motives of excessive covetousness.

A second painful surprise, however, awaited the Central Empires, in the formation of the Balkan League and the quick success of the sudden war which it waged against Turkey. The prestige of Germany at Constantinople was thoroughly shaken by this event. Not alone did the Turks begin to doubt the boasted political predominance of the Triple Alliance in Europe, but also the efficacy of the German military system, in which their army was being trained. Germany had supplied the Porte with cannon and munitions, as well as with military instructors. The first tested result was disaster.

**Machinations productive of the second Balkan War.** Germany and Austria-Hungary, however, in the aftermath of the Balkan War of 1912, found the wherewithal to rehabilitate themselves in the eyes of the Turks. To prevent the full fruition of the victory of the Balkan allies was their special care. Their machinations were the principal cause of the second Balkan War, under cover of which Turkey reoccupied a large part of Thrace, with Adrianople, after having relinquished it by treaty. Had Serbia insisted upon the fulfilment of the conditions upon which the Balkan League had been formed, which would have given

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her a part of Albania and a coast-line on the Adriatic,<sup>1</sup> Germany and Austria-Hungary were expectant of enforcing their veto, if necessary, and this would have meant either conquest of the recalcitrant Balkan states or the abrupt kindling of the European conflagration.

Europe recognized the accomplished facts in Thrace and Macedonia, after the second Balkan War. Thus Germany regained the good graces of the Turks by enabling them to keep Adrianople, symbol of their ancient power in Europe.<sup>2</sup> She prepared at the same time against the Serbs and the Greeks, an understanding between the Turks and Bulgarians, who had interests henceforth almost identical.<sup>3</sup>

**Italy's passive rôle in 1913.** In the diplomatic interference which had altered the division of the first fruits of victory among the late Balkan allies and had made the later internecine struggle inevitable, Italy had hardly more than a passive

<sup>1</sup> According to the Serbian Premier, Pashich, at the London Conference, 29th of May, 1913, his government was offered by Austria the whole of the valley of the Vardar, with Salonika, if it would voluntarily withdraw its forces from the Adriatic coast. The offer was refused. Serbia by the pressure of the Great Powers was compelled at the conference in London to accept a compromise which barred her from any port, while giving her in Macedonia territory which the terms of the Balkan League had explicitly assigned to Bulgaria.

<sup>2</sup> The first Turkish capital in Europe—before the conquest of Constantinople.

<sup>3</sup> *La Turquie et la Guerre*, by J. Aulneau (Paris, 1915).

part. It was Austria-Hungary who directly ordered Serbia and Montenegro to evacuate Durazzo and Scutari, and it was the Central Empires that invented the so-called Albanian nationality<sup>1</sup> in order to erect in the Balkans a new German dynasty, represented in the person of Wilhelm of Wied, whom they induced the other Great Powers to join with them in investing with sovereign authority. Italy simply acquiesced in this measure and gave it her support because behind it was the implied menace on the part of Austria-Hungary that if it were not adopted she would endeavour to occupy Albania, ostensibly as a safeguard against a like purpose by Serbia and Greece, but really to retain possession of it as she had of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Prince of Wied soon fled from Albania in candid fear of his quasi-subjects, and so fell to the ground this characteristic Teutonic project. If Austria-Hungary had really attempted to take military possession of Albania in 1912 or 1913, there is little doubt that Italy would at once have declared war.

**Ultterior rivalry of Italy and Austria-Hungary.** Among all the problems of external politics with which Italian statesmen were preoccupied during the years succeeding the wars of liberation and unification, that of the control of the Adriatic was

<sup>1</sup> "The idea of constituting Albania a kingdom was contrary to all the historic traditions, one could say even to the evident facts."—GENERAL NIOX, *Les Pays Balkaniques*.

of the most immediate importance. It was the very existence of this question, together with that of the yet "unredeemed" provinces of Istria and the Trentino, which to all discerning observers rendered the thin pretence of a general community of interests between Italy and Austria-Hungary so absurd. More inevitable even than the motives of the Punic wars, which decided whether the Mediterranean was to be a Carthaginian or a Roman sea, was the ulterior rivalry of Italy and Austria-Hungary. Italy bided her time for the relegating of Austria-Hungary to her proper place, with reference to the northern or north-eastern shore of the Adriatic; she patiently tolerated the development of the Austro-Hungarian naval power at Pola and along the Illyrian coast; but the limit of her longanimity was marked by her own concrete interest in future changes of sovereignty in Balkan territory, whether littoral or inland. Austria-Hungary had long before entered into an understanding with Italy as to the whole of the Balkan matter; but Austria-Hungary acted continuously as if no such understanding existed. Thus, for instance, she diligently maintained in Albania a system of agitation favourable to herself. Tired of friendly protestation, Italy herself finally commenced a similar propaganda. In 1903 both Austria and Russia established financial agents in Macedonia, without forewarning of their intention, thus seeking what in the case of the

former would have been a disloyal advantage over Italy.

**Germany opposed to an Italo-Austrian intimacy.** In much of Austria-Hungary's treatment of Italy, Germany's will could be discerned. Germany was always opposed to a very great intimacy between Austria-Hungary and Italy. There were moments, even, when the Vienna Government appeared to feel the need of more cordial relations with Italy, in order that it might be less dependent upon Berlin.

Although Italy had an immense length of coast, her natural position relative to the Adriatic was much inferior to that of Austria-Hungary. Pola was the strongest naval base in the upper Adriatic. The low and unaccentuated eastern or north-eastern shore of the Italian Peninsula is devoid of any harbour that could rival in natural adaptability that of Pola. But the opposite shore of Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania is rugged and often deeply indented. The Albanian coast presented to Italy her only chance of offsetting the Austrian possession of Pola, Montefalcone, Rovigno, Fiume, Spalatro, Ragusa, and Cattaro. It was absolutely vital to her that, however the sovereignty of this coast might be shifted, it should never fall into the hands of the Hapsburg dynasty. The strategical value of the Albanian harbours resides in the fact that, while the coast-line is only about one-third as long as that of Austria-Hungary, yet it all lies very much



nearer to that of Italy. The possession by Italy of the best of these harbours, that of Valona or Avlona, with an adequate navy, would insure to her the ability to close the Adriatic at will, preventing either egress or ingress of the ships of other nations.

Italy's desire had fastened upon Valona long before the first Balkan War. When in 1913 Austria-Hungary was manœuvring with her usual slyness for an excuse or an opportunity to set foot in Albania, Italy's watch upon her was particularly alert. In April, 1913, when Austria-Hungary threatened to occupy Scutari, which the Montenegrins claimed by right of conquest, as theirs, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Rome declared that if she did this Italy "must go to Durazzo and Valona," even if her ally did not consent. The action threatened by Austria-Hungary would "disturb the balance in the Adriatic" to the disadvantage of Italy, and would "not only strike a blow at Article VII<sup>1</sup> of the treaty, but at the treaty of the Triple Alliance in its entirety."

**The question of the "unredeemed" provinces.** The practical relation of the Albanian question to the future power of Italy in the Mediterranean

<sup>1</sup> This article provided that each of the contracting Powers was to give due notice to the others whenever it took any steps which might have the effect of changing the balance of political influences in the Balkans; and in such case was to occupy itself simultaneously with the question of compensation to the other Powers.

appealed readily to all of her citizens. An external question that interested them yet more ardently, however, was that of the provinces to the north of the Peninsula, peopled by their racial brethren, but still under the yoke of Austria. There was little if any traditional sentiment about the Albanian question, so far as the Italians were concerned; but the question of the "unredeemed" provinces was both sentimental and practical. Outside of Italy, its purely patriotic and humane aspect was most considered. That Italians whose fathers and grandfathers had fought so passionately for national unity should look with sore hearts on those still severed regions was comprehensible to any one. The argument in itself, however, would have been altogether inadequate, had it not been possible to show that the Italians under the Austrian yoke were abused and oppressed, dishonoured and outraged in various intolerable ways. This fact more than offset certain economic considerations, as in the case of Trieste and Istria, which, if the Austro-Hungarian Government had been just and humane, would have made a change of allegiance absurd on their part, notwithstanding that the great majority of the population was Italian. In the economic sense, whatever the political fact may be, Trieste must always belong more to Austria and Fiume more to Hungary than to Italy.

**Need of a strategical frontier.** Sentimental and practical reasons, however, were in unison as to

the acquisition of the Trentino and a part of Carniola and of Carinthia. There was absolute need of the rectification of Italy's northern and north-eastern frontiers, if she were ever to feel herself secure from Austrian invasion. This was clearly obvious. Without such necessity, and that of guarding the Adriatic from hostile domination, it is doubtful if the Italian Government would ever have been moved to expose its people and itself to the hazards and stress of war with the great Central Powers.

No European country, except Belgium, had stood in greater danger of grave injury by surprise at the hands of an arrogant and powerful neighbour. When in 1866, Franz Josef parted with the province of Venezia, through the mediation of Napoleon III., his ministers took very good care that along the Alpine frontier and the western side of the Isonzo, southward to the Adriatic, all the commanding military positions should remain in Austrian hands. Perhaps if the French Emperor had negotiated this transference of sovereignty for his own behoof, instead of that of Victor Emmanuel, his diplomatic agents would have looked more closely to the strategical value of the newly defined frontier.

**Infamous tyranny of the Emperor Franz Josef.** Yet, even in presence of the permanent problem of defence on the northern and north-eastern frontier, the issue of "irrendentism" would have assumed

far less importance, and perhaps might never have troubled the relations of the two nations at all, if Austria-Hungary had pursued an equitable and humane course towards her Italian subjects. The Hapsburg monarchy, in fact, committed the same error, both in Istria and the Trentino and in its Slavic provinces, as did the German Imperial Government in Alsace-Lorraine. In each of the two Germanic despotisms, there was the same quality of narrow-minded brutality. It was impossible that this should not be productive of hatred, abhorrence, and vengeful passion, against the supreme authorities.

For several decades there persisted in the world at large a too flattering estimate of the character of Franz Josef. The impression made by his advent to power in 1848 was, through fortuitous circumstances, very greatly in his favour. His reign, following the abdication of Ferdinand IV., which was an inevitable consequence of the great propaganda of liberty which had spread anew from France, began with implied and expressed promises of a sacred regard for the rights of all his people. Franz Josef was in the full splendour of youth, was credited with many noble qualities, and by hundreds of sycophants was acclaimed as typical of moral and physical beauty. He was said to possess courage, love of justice, humane sensibility, and loyalty. His first manifesto decreed that:

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True liberty, equality of rights for all the nationalities of the Empire, as well as for all citizens before the law, no less than the participation of the people's mandatories in legislation, such shall be the basis of my rule.

**England and Russia pleaded for his subjects.** Such was not the basis of his rule! His reign soon inaugurated that long series of acts of injustice, of faithlessness, of cynical egoism, of callous cruelty, which was to render it forever infamous in the eyes of history. There must have been a close kinship between the soul of the Austrian Kaiser and that of the "Red Sultan" of Turkey. The massacres of Hungarian insurgents which he ordered preceded by many years those of the Armenians and the Macedonians. England and Russia both pleaded with the young monarch to spare his subjects. No heathen conqueror ever more flagrantly broke his given word of pardon. He or his satraps even caused women in Hungary who were of kin to heroes of the revolt to be scourged in the public places.

These bacchanalia of vengeance [wrote Jean Finot], were prolonged for years. The loyal and magnanimous sovereign unceasingly tortured and ruined the Magyar population. He took from it, little by little, the whole fabric of its ancient constitution. He trampled upon the vanquished, as cannibals do upon their victims before they devour them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Civilisés contre Allemands* (Paris, 1915).

Later Franz Josef was forced by his reverse at Sadowa to concede a new constitution to Hungary. It was most characteristic that he revealed himself as a monster of iniquitous rule so long as he could do so with impunity; but when it seemed about to bring upon him a part of the harsh retribution which he deserved, he could yield to adverse force with an amazing lack of real pride or dignity. The acts of ferocity committed in his name in Northern Italy were equal to those in Hungary, Galicia, and Bohemia. In Istria and the Trentino the régime of injustice and repression continued as long as he was master there.

**Continued persecutions in "Italia irredenta."**

Austrian tyranny is almost a historical byword. Schoolboys know the quality of that tyranny from the time when they learn the legend of Gessler and Tell; and in whatever degree that legend may be apocryphal, it is at least truthfully symbolical of the character of the Austrian rule, not only in the Middle Ages, under the second head of the Hapsburg imperial line, but, with some excepted periods, until the present time. Under the most favourable circumstances it would have required the passage of several generations after the unification of Italy to soften the tradition of Austrian rapacity and misrule in Lombardy, Mantua, and Venezia. As long as that tradition was kept alive, all Italy was naturally sensitive to the smallest complaints of the men of her race who

were still Austrian subjects. This open wound appeared always as a horrid chasm between the nations. Persecution of the Italian inhabitants of the "unredeemed" provinces continued. It was the constant preventative of cordial sentiments between the governments at Rome and Vienna. The ministers of the Emperor made perpetual war upon the Italian language and upon Italian literature; upon Italian culture as represented in the university at Trieste, with regard to which the government made repeated promise of licence and even support, but which, owing to the perfidious hostility of the Austrians, was never securely established.

**Pro-Austrian intrigues at the Vatican.** A further cause of mutual distrust and irritation was the endeavour of the Austrian ecclesiastical class to assume the former rôle of the French clergy<sup>1</sup> in support of the Vatican policies and

<sup>1</sup> Under the Second Empire and in the early days of the Third Republic. There were audacious efforts also by the Germanophile party to interfere at the Vatican while negotiations to determine Italy's course were pending between Rome and Vienna, not long after Benedict XV. became Pope. "Since Italy declared war against Austria," wrote Ferrero, "the influence of the Germanophile party at the Vatican has increased, and from what cause it is not difficult to divine. . . . It is an effect of the Roman question. While Italy remained neutral and firm, no one at the Vatican could hope that the European War would offer any occasion whatever for again bringing forward the Roman question. But after Italy had entered the struggle the number of those increased at the Vatican who desired that the Holy See

claims, as against those of the Quirinal. Austrian Catholicism retained the narrowness and the extreme formalism which had always distinguished it; and the Emperor counted among his most valuable titles that of "His Apostolic Majesty." On the subject of the Church there was but little sympathy between the masses in Italy and those in Austria-Hungary. For twenty-five years after the occupation of Rome by the Royal Government, "a very bitter hatred of priests and of the Church was widespread among Italians."<sup>1</sup> Provocation of this sentiment continued to be found in the "anti-Italian spirit" which "dominated the policy of the Vatican during the greater part of the pontificate of Leo XIII."<sup>2</sup> There were abuses in

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should support Austria and aid her as much as possible, in the hope that, if she should be victorious, she would prescribe among the other conditions of peace the restitution of Rome to the Pope; or, if that were not possible, would give to the Pope some other satisfaction relative to the vexed Roman question."

<sup>1</sup> Bagot.

<sup>2</sup> "Rome had been one of the instruments with which Germany had always tried to stir up discord between France and Italy. Without the Roman question perhaps the German Empire would not have emerged, or would not so easily have risen to such great power. It was the Roman question which prevented us (the Italians) from aiding France in 1870; it was the conquest of Rome which rendered cold and difficult the relations between Italy and France from 1870 to 1880. Italy knew that a part of the French nation, most fervently Catholic, had not forgiven her for the method which she employed to deprive the Papacy of the Holy City; and because, after seeking support elsewhere, to escape isolation, and being unable to ally herself with France, she



the lower clergy and honest efforts by laymen and a part of the priesthood to reform them. Many monastic communities were dissolved and their properties sequestered, because, through unfair competition, they were oppressive of unecclesiastical labour, and because they sheltered too large a number of social drones.

**Growing liberality of Italian Catholics.** But "anti-clericalism did not imply anti-Catholicism."<sup>1</sup> Gradually, towards each other, the attitude of Church and State had greatly softened; so that the Italians who might be termed worshippers appeared to be in reality far freer in thought than persons of that same category in France, and immensely more so than those in Austria, where the tenacious weed of mediæval bigotry still stoutly thrives.

Italian public opinion was seriously apprehensive of the intrigues of the Austrian and German clericals at the Vatican. It was remembered that the exclusion from the papal chair of Cardinal Rampolla, the candidate most favoured by the Italians when Pius X. was elected, was due to the arbitrary veto of the Austrian Emperor, who feared the former's liberalism and above all his friendship for France. It is a fact, not then

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took in despair the great and fatal step and the risk of entering the Austro-German alliance. But for the Roman question, the Triple Alliance could not perhaps have been formed; and the European War (Who knows?) might never have broken out."—  
FERRERO. <sup>1</sup> Bagot.

possessed by the world at large, but known in the German and Austrian chancelleries, that Leo XIII. used his influence to further the formation of the Franco-Russian alliance. In this his secretary of state, Cardinal Rampolla, zealously seconded him. Leo XIII. was greatly disquieted by the unbounded and reckless ambition of Germany. Later, after Rampolla's death and after the outbreak of the Great War, when the successor to Pius X. was to be chosen, the feeling against Austria was so strong in the Sacred College that the votes of the majority centred at once upon a candidate who was distinctly sympathetic to France. Monsignor de la Chiesa, who had been the chief of Cardinal Rampolla's secretaries, thus became Benedict XV.<sup>1</sup> He lost no time in naming Monsignor Ferrata, the papal nuncio at Paris, who also had been favourable to the Franco-Russian alliance, as his own secretary of state.

**Italy subjectively antagonistic to Austria.** Statesmen cannot permanently belie the temper of their people. Except on the coldest grounds of expediency, Austria was never welcome for one moment to the mass of the Italian nation as an ally.

If there had existed no traditional and racial cause of aversion from the Austrian monarchy,

<sup>1</sup> "The anti-German current within the Conclave was strong; and it chose as Pope the former secretary and disciple of Cardinal Rampolla, the cardinal who was not made Pope at the preceding Conclave because Austria had opposed him with her veto. His election, therefore, had a clear enough significance."—FERRERO.

the marked tendency of Italy towards greater and greater political liberty would have been a sufficient motive. A people that means to enjoy a rational freedom to the utmost cannot but view with some degree of contempt a neighbour that is content to remain in physical and moral servitude. The rise of the modern Italian nation is admirable for the clearness of purpose and the steadfast consistency which have characterized it. Massimo d'Azeglio, minister to the first Victor Emmanuel, King of Sardinia, was the author of an immortal saying, which the great Italian leaders seem to have kept constantly in mind: "Now that Italy has been created, the need is to create Italians."<sup>1</sup> Richard Bagot's profound observation of Italian character led him to write of that early period:

The unity that had been accomplished was a political union only. Social unity was still far from having been obtained. . . . In countless districts the Italian language was neither spoken nor understood by the lower orders. Every province, nay, almost every village had its own dialect. . . . Italian is now understood by all but the very oldest members of the lower classes.

**Rapid political enlightenment in Italy.** While Austria-Hungary in her political constitution was still more of the Middle Ages than of modern times, while her people are of many diverse nationalities:

<sup>1</sup> "Ora che è fatta l'Italia, bisogna fare gli Italiani."

mutually distrustful, almost strangers to one another, though living under the same despotism; the majority still bound to an arrogant and narrow ecclesiasticism, whether of the Catholic or the Orthodox confession; almost all of the members of the lower classes destitute still of independent political thought; yet Italy, on the other hand, had steadily advanced towards national homogeneity, towards intelligent general suffrage and universal education. Her evolution in popular political enlightenment was rapid. "The modern Italian," according to the author above cited, "is at heart and by instinct a democrat. Italian democracy is not aggressive. . . . The Italian democratic spirit is more natural and spontaneous (than the English). . . . The Italians of today are by no means the Italians of half a century ago, or even . . . of a quarter of a century ago. The Turkish War awakened all the virile energy and pride of their race. The anti-Italian spirit displayed by foreign nations . . . instilled into the heart of every Italian a dogged determination to support his country in her unflinching resolution to pursue her own policy and to shrink from no sacrifice to cement her position as the greatest Mediterranean Power."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Italy . . . was a democratic state (in a sense perhaps even more democratic than France) while the Central Empires were politically unfree, still based essentially upon royal and patriarchal domination of the people."—*"Times" History of the War* (London, 1915).

**Pacific policy of Victor Emmanuel III.** Not alone had Germany and Austria-Hungary held a derogatory attitude towards the peninsular kingdom, until the moment approached for putting their colossal schemes of expansion to the test of conflict; but Britain herself had formed the habit of considering Italy as a negligible quantity. Now, of a sudden, however, all three of the members of the Triple Entente, and, indeed, all the rest of the world regarded her with anxious eyes. Britain was at pains to renew the ancient friendship. "Italy had again become a great power in English estimation."<sup>1</sup> The time had past when Italy could mutely endure the arrogant tutelage of her allies.

Besides the Lybian War and the Mediterranean agreement with Britain and France, Germany and Austria-Hungary had stored up other motives of resentment against Italy. Her pacific rôle<sup>2</sup> since the accession of Victor Emmanuel III. had been marked by kindlier relations with the French

<sup>1</sup> Ferrero.

<sup>2</sup> "In the last thirty years Italy had made great sacrifices to peace and to the European equilibrium. To preserve them she has bridled her aspirations, has stifled her grievances, has refused to listen to the cries of '*Italia irredenta*.' She has consented to hold, in face of Austria, an inferior military position, due as much to the formidable advantage of the Trentino as to the nature of her own Adriatic coast, flat, favourable to landing, without a single point in the 500 miles from Venice to Brindisi, where a true military port can exist."—GABRIEL ARNOULT, *Les Origines Historiques de la Guerre* (Paris, 1915).

Republic, with which she had made a sound commercial peace, after a long and bitter war of imposts. Delcassé expressed in 1902 the opinion that Italy would never take part in an aggression against France. The basis of this opinion could not have been a cause of satisfaction to Germany and Austria-Hungary. Germany in the conference at Algeiras was supported by Austria-Hungary alone, although Italy was present.

**Continuous menace to Italian independence.** The time was indeed past when Italy must mutely endure the arrogant and disdainful tutelage of her Allies. It was a cumulative wrong, that which Austria-Hungary had heaped upon her or her racial children, in the long years of her dignified suffering. An Italian writer<sup>1</sup> very ably defined her situation, in the period between the Franco-Prussian War and the Germanic aggression upon Serbia:

The threat against Italian independence was urgent and continuous from the day that Italy entered the Triple Alliance. That unfortunate pact . . . was for Italy the only way to postpone the inevitable attack from Austria. Just because Italy could not afford to be the open enemy of the dual monarchy, she had to accept the position of an Ally. For more than three decades Italy lived in dread of an Ally in whom she plainly saw an enemy. Defence had to be as discreet as it was permanent, under the perennial veiled threat.

<sup>1</sup> Guglielmo Emanuel, in *Land and Water*, 29th May, 1915.

**At every moment open to attack.** Austria openly and insolently made armed preparations on the Italian north-eastern frontier, and coldly calculated that it was (together with the persistent suppression of Italian nationality among her subjects) the best way to cow Italy into submission and into renunciation of her dream of complete national unity. It was quite clear that the Hapsburg monarchy was not merely taking excusable measures of preparation against the time when her neighbour should grow tired of subjection. Austria was in reality preparing to attack Italy when the opportunity should be favourable. The strange thing about the Triple Alliance was this: that it had already ceased to guarantee that security from an Austrian menace for which alone Italy had entered it. Twice, though no cause of offence had been offered to Austria, Italy had been in immediate danger of invasion by her Ally: once when the country was visited by one of the greatest disasters that ever befell mankind, the Messina earthquake; and again when the young kingdom was engaged in the Tripoli campaign. It is no exaggeration to say that at every moment Italy was open to attack because she had not those strategic frontiers which the present war will assure to her.

**Rebuff to the Central Powers in August, 1913.** Behind Austria was the mighty danger of Germany. The march on Salonika through Serbia not only spelt the end of the free Balkan nationalities, but also that Italy should become in the Mediterranean what she already was in the Adriatic, the humble servant of the Teutonic Powers.

The governments of the Central Empires underestimated the force of character of the people of Italy and their leaders. This was proved by their having continued to treat her, down to the time when her neutrality was in the balance, as essentially inferior to themselves. Yet they should have recognized her real temper earlier. In August, 1913, smarting under keen disappointment at the defeat of her hopes in both the Balkan wars, Austria informed Italy that she purposed to attack Serbia. She asked for Italy's concurrence and co-operation, proposing to construe the treaty of alliance as binding her to such action. The first public disclosure of this step was made in the Italian Parliament by Giolitti, ex-Premier, on the 5th of December, 1914, and it produced a profound shock throughout Europe. The response to the demand of the Vienna Government was "that the treaties which bound Italy to Germany and Austria were of a purely defensive character and that it was impossible for her to take part in an aggressive war."<sup>1</sup> But Austria-Hungary was already prepared to commence the war upon Serbia, with full assurance of the approval and co-

<sup>1</sup> "If the war did not break out at that period (August, 1913), it was because Italy . . . refused to consent to it. It may be understood, therefore, why her Allies did not consult her in 1914 and excluded her from their project. . . . For a year Austria had been resolved upon the war. . . . It is possible that Germany restrained her last year; it is certain that this year she urged her forward."—FRANCIS CHARMES: *La Guerre* (1915).



operation of Germany. The Austrian Chancellor had sent Count Hoyos to Bukarest, where the plenipotentiaries of the Balkan states were in session, to inform the Government of Rumania that Austria-Hungary would "defend Bulgaria by force of arms," if need be, and to dictate also the terms of peace which were to be allowed to the latter. It was not the curt refusal of the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, San Giuliano,<sup>1</sup> which prevented Austria-Hungary from advancing. It was simply that the Serbian Government, warned by King Carol of Rumania, made haste to accept the treaty of Bukarest, and thus the European conflagration was deferred for nearly a year.<sup>2</sup>

The Central Powers, after what had gone before, could not have expected in the Great War of 1914, anything more favourable to themselves, on the part of Italy, than neutrality. But they made, after the die had been cast and war was actually begun, the same demand upon Italy that Austria-Hungary had made in 1913. Italy's refusal was substantially in the same terms as before. An aggressive war was not contemplated among the objects of her treaty with Austria-Hungary, nor in that with Germany.<sup>3</sup>

**Italy's claims against Austria-Hungary. The**

<sup>1</sup> San Giuliano died 17th October, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> *La Guerre*. Ernest Denis (Paris, 1915).

<sup>3</sup> "We remain grateful to Italy for the immense disappointment which she has given Austria in proclaiming her neutrality, as a

neutrality maintained by Italy for more than nine months was of the strictest character. But during two-thirds of that period she was urging also upon Austria-Hungary a claim for the cession of territory and for a rectification of frontier, both as "compensation" for the violent disturbance by the latter of the political equilibrium in the Balkan Peninsula.

Few things in history are more curious when considered in the light of their real significance, than the long-drawn-out negotiations which ensued between the chancelleries of Rome and Vienna. Viewed superficially and solely by the letter of the argumentative despatches which were exchanged, they might seem to some critics to have almost the character of blackmail, on the part of the Italian Government. Although this suggestion was devoid of the slightest logical ground, it was often found in the Germanophile press. It is true that no one could draw from a study of the diplomatic documents relating to the negotiations which were published by the Italian Government that questions of general political right were involved. Italy was wholly and exclusively occupied with her material interests. This was, in fact, entirely normal and natural. When coldly analysed, aside from some elements of popular sentiment, based

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pledge of which she immediately withdrew the forces that she had assembled on our frontier."—FRANCIS CHARMES, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

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chiefly upon humane incentives and not consciously on sheer selfishness, the same motive will be found to have actuated all of the nations that took part in the war as of those that remained aloof from it. That motive was, of course, either national safety or national advancement. Italy had long awaited the moment when it would seem possible to acquire the "unredeemed" provinces and to obtain a better strategical exterior line of defence, as against her Germano-Magyar neighbour. But when that moment arrived, she was, unfortunately, unprepared to take immediate advantage of it by force of arms. Her army had been severely tried in the Libyan War. Ferrero has frankly explained in that regard what was not previously well understood.

Whoever could read the newspapers in a critical spirit, and was acquainted with the secret reports of the generals, knows that the army sent to conquer Tripolitania suddenly lost its aggressive energy; so that it was in a short time reduced to the defensive, from which it only emerged now and then to attempt some feeble attacks. Everybody knows that when the treaty of Lausanne was signed, after a year of war, the Italian army had succeeded only in capturing the coast. . . . At Rome those who decide for peace or war naturally asked one another whether the army which had had such difficulty in mastering Tripolitania, defended by 30,000 Turco-Arabs, armed with muskets, could easily succeed in conquering a part of

the Austrian Empire, defended by European troops, equipped with machine-guns and modern cannon.

That a certain degree of doubt should have existed as to the real value of the Italian army is comprehensible, not only for those, but for other reasons.

**The Italian army untested in modern warfare.** Italy had never been victorious in a great war, wherein she had fought unaided. After Austria in 1859, at the instance of France and England, surprised Sardinia much in the same manner in which she surprised Serbia in 1814, delivering to her an ultimatum whereby she needlessly demanded instant disarmament (a course upon which Cavour had previously decided, but which was now countermanded in face of a desired provocation), it was only by reason of the splendid aid given to Victor Emmanuel by Napoleon III. at Magenta and Solferino that Lombardy, Mantua, and Peschiara were yielded by Franz Josef at the peace of Zurich.<sup>1</sup> Garibaldi's war upon the Bourbon sovereignty of the Two Sicilies involved on either side only comparatively small numbers of combatants, and was in no sense a satisfactory test, nor were any of his subsequent campaigns, of the military aptitude of the Italian nation. The second war of Victor Emmanuel against Austria for the possession of Venezia in 1866 was

<sup>1</sup> 18th September, 1860.

averse to Italy in the field. She suffered a crushing land defeat before inferior numbers at Custozza, and her fleet lost the battle of Lissa. It was, of course, Prussia, who won Venezia for Italy by her great victory at Sadowa. Franz Josef saw that, if he did not make peace at whatever cost with both of his enemies, his empire would be completely demolished by their concordant efforts, under their defensive and offensive alliance.<sup>1</sup>

**A temporizing course pursued for nine months.** With depleted finances and an army exhausted by combating semi-barbarous guerrillas in a tropical climate, and as yet unproved in strictly modern warfare, with its munitions and equipments far from complete, Italy did wisely in the first nine months of the Great War to pursue a temporizing course. There were two aspects of her attitude towards Austria-Hungary. Her dominant object was, either by negotiation or by war, to secure to herself the portions of the Austrian domain which were chiefly inhabited by Italians. To insure its attainment, her army must be perfectly prepared to meet the alternative contingency. Therefore after the 28th of July, 1914, when war was declared upon Serbia by Austria, the immediate and most urgent object of Italy was to gain time.

**Austrian protestations not of durable value.** No threat whatever was made to Austria-Hungary by Italy during the four months of the negotiations,

<sup>1</sup> Signed, 8th April, 1866.

unless the declared intention to resume, in certain, contingencies, her entire liberty of action be counted as one. Austria-Hungary was also warned that her attack upon Serbia, obviously aimed at a result which would disturb the balance of interests in the Balkans, was a blow at Italy herself. In his despatches,<sup>1</sup> setting forth the grounds of the Italian claims for compensation for this disturbance, Sonnino, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Rome, never departed from a simple, direct, absolutely clear mode of expression. Nor did he conceal by polite circumlocution the conviction of the Italian Government that Austria-Hungary had deliberately misstated her ulterior purpose.

The Austro-Hungarian Government [wrote Sonnino in a telegram to the Duke of Avarna, Ambassador at Vienna,]<sup>2</sup> has several times vainly declared that it has no intention of making any territorial conquest at the expense of Serbia. A declaration made in that form does not constitute a durable engagement. . . . Besides, the invasion of Serbia, even if it were to be only temporary, already suffices alone to trouble seriously the equilibrium in the Balkan Peninsula and to entitle us to compensation.

It would be useless to follow in great detail the long arguments put forward by Count Berchtold

<sup>1</sup> *Italian Green Book*, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> 9th December, 1914, *Italian Green Book*.

first and later by Baron Burian on behalf of the Austrian Emperor, in defence of the aggression upon Serbia. In another form they are almost identical with those which Austria-Hungary, with Germany as her abettor, opposed in July, 1914, to the protests of Russia, Britain, and France, and of which Italy herself approved.

**Italy's interest in the Sporades and in Albania.** Italy was accused of having herself violated Article VII. of the Italo-Austrian treaty by her retention of the Sporades islands, after her war with Turkey, and also by her recent occupation of Valona in Albania.<sup>1</sup> At the same time it was suggested by Baron Macchio, the Austrian Ambassador at Rome, that Italy might find a sufficient compensation in Albania for the invasion of Serbia. The response of Signor Sonnino to this suggestion was that "he saw in Albania but one veritable interest for Italy, and that a negative one: to prevent any other Power from establishing itself there." To the charge of violation of the Italo-Austrian treaty by the occupation of Valona, he answered that it was actuated by disorders which reigned in Albania and was intended to enforce respect for the decisions of the Powers relative to that country, Italy being the only one not implicated in the war which could take this step. The efforts of his government as to Albania he added, "were designed to conserve for the

<sup>1</sup> Valona was occupied by an Italian force in December, 1914.

moment, as far as was possible, the *statu quo*, while awaiting the ultimate decisions of Europe on the subject, after the war should have ended." When Austro-Hungary repeated the charge, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs finally caused the Vienna Government to be informed that his own government "admitted no discussion of compensation in connection with the occupation of the Sporades and Valona." As to the Sporades, they had not yet been evacuated because Turkey had not fulfilled the engagements into which she had entered in the treaty of Lausanne, since there still remained in Libya many officers and soldiers of the Ottoman army.<sup>1</sup>

**Germany takes in hand the Austro-Italian negotiations.** All was as yet preliminary fencing in the diplomatic duel between Austria-Hungary and Italy. The latter gave no definite form to her claims until, after three months of tortuous discussion, Austria-Hungary was brought grudgingly to accept the principle of a territorial cession on her part as the basis of specific negotiations.<sup>2</sup> Mean-

<sup>1</sup> The islands in the eastern Mediterranean seized or captured by Italy in her Turkish war were Stampalia, Rhodes, Casos, Scarpanto, Calchi, and Cos. Austria-Hungary objected to Italy taking possession of any islands in the *Ægean Sea* proper, waiving any claim for compensation for the occupation of Rhodes and the Sporades. In consequence of the objections of Austria-Hungary, Italy refrained from occupying Chio and Mitylene; but they were afterwards seized by Greece, in the first Balkan War.

<sup>2</sup> 9th March, 1915. Italian *Green Book*, Document 39.



while the anxiety of the German Kaiser regarding Italy's ultimate course in reference to the war had prompted him to instruct Prince Buelow, the former Imperial Chancellor, to take the negotiations in hand. It was Prince Buelow who had once declared in the Reichstag that the Triple Alliance was the best means of preventing war between Austria-Hungary and Italy, citing the remark of another statesman that these two countries must either be allies or enemies. Buelow strove to influence both Austria-Hungary and Italy, the latter to reduce her proposed demands as much as possible, the former to grant the minimum of such demands. In the end, Prince Buelow promised to Italy, in the name of Germany, yet also professing to speak for Austria-Hungary, a good deal more than the latter would concede.

**Italy puts a frank veto on Austrian action in the Balkans.** As the negotiations proceeded, Sonnino became more and more categorical in his statements regarding the position of his government. It was now a question of a second contemplated advance by the Austro-Hungarian troops into Serbia. Baron Burian had become the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs. Sonnino in a telegram to Avarna, 17th February, 1915, said:

I recommend you to profit by every occasion to repeat clearly to Baron Burian that, in order to avoid regrettable and dangerous complications, the obvi-

ous<sup>1</sup> interpretation of Article VII. requires that there shall be accord before action, except in the case of the other party consenting that the procedure shall be otherwise. In the present circumstances the Italian Government can not give such consent; consequently the communication made by us to the Austro-Hungarian Government has all the force of a veto, which we oppose to any military action of Austro-Hungary in the Balkans, as long as an agreement as to compensation shall not have been arrived at. It must be plainly set forth that every proceeding of a different character on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government will be interpreted by us for the future as an open violation of the conditions of the treaty and as an evident sign of its intention to resume its liberty of action. In that case we shall consider ourselves also as perfectly authorized to resume in full our liberty of action for the safeguarding of our interests.<sup>2</sup>

**Popular support of the Italian demands.** To Prince Buelow, Sonnino made an eloquent exposition of Italian popular sentiment as to the national claims against Austria-Hungary:

The Savoy monarchy finds its most solid support in the fact that it incarnates the national ideal. This support is so strong that it has enabled the monarchy to maintain itself triumphantly in spite of its long conflict with the Papacy and the development of socialism in Italy in its most revolutionary phase.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The French word in the *Green Book* is *notoire*.

<sup>2</sup> Italian *Green Book*, Document 24.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Bagot had a different idea of Italian socialism: "I should

Hence, aside from concessions of a nature to satisfy, at least in a certain measure, the national sentiment, there is no ground of discussion. All this is without any dependence upon the will or the caprice of this or that ministry. The tide of public opinion would drown every other question, would sweep away every other force and surmount every obstacle, whatever it may be. Neither subtle arguments, nor sombre predictions, nor exaggerated pictures of peril to be incurred, could restrain it.

At another moment Signor Sonnino reminded the Austrian Government that the war had been begun "contrary to all the good counsel given by Italy, and in opposition to her greatest political interests."

**Austria-Hungary admits the principle of territorial concessions.** When Austria-Hungary was brought at last, on the 9th of March, 1915, to admit the discussion of a territorial cession, Italy insisted, among other conditions of further negotiations, that they should be absolutely secret, and that the agreement, if made, should be carried into immediate execution. Baron Burian quibbled at the first requirement and objected strongly to the second, raising once more, in addition, the

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not be faithful to my subject were I not to express my belief that Italian socialism, which is rather constructive than destructive, has played a not inconsiderable part in laying foundations for that public opinion in Italy which has recently burst into life with such magnificent and irresistible force."—*The Italians of Today*.

question of compensation to Austria-Hungary for the Italian occupation of the Sporades and Valona. Austria-Hungary desired that the negotiations should not be secret, because it wished, through its own and the German agents in Italy, to work upon public opinion in favour of a vague and dilatory method of settlement, which would easily admit of evasion and might finally drag the Rome Government into the war on the side of the Central Powers. Even after it had agreed tentatively to the stipulation of secrecy, it very quickly violated the spirit of it.

**The fate of Italians under arms in Austria's service.** Into the matter of the immediate transference of the sovereignty of the territory which it was Italy's intention to demand entered the very delicate problem of the allegiance, pending the war, of the soldiers whom the Imperial Government had drawn therefrom. Italy asked that these men should be released from their present military duty and returned to their homes as soon as the transference of territorial sovereignty had been consummated. Prince Buelow urged the abatement of this demand, declaring that it had no precedent in history, and that the guarantees of Austria-Hungary and Germany for the execution of the treaty should suffice. Austria-Hungary endeavoured to make the cession of territory dependent upon and consequent to the obtaining of future undefined advantages by her, resultant

from her warfare in the Balkans. Baron Burian declared also that his government "certainly could not, during the war, change the status of the populations whose sons were about to fight for the integrity of the monarchy." Sonnino pointed out the absurdity of this position, if Austria-Hungary were sincerely disposed to make any cession of territory. And he informed Prince Buelow that Baron Burian's view of the matter rendered an accord such as the Italian Government desired, impossible; namely, the cession only of what was actually Austrian territory, on the one hand, against a guarantee, on the other, of neutrality while the war lasted, whatever might be its issue. Prince Buelow said thereupon that the whole matter would be referred to Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

After an audience with Kaiser Wilhelm, Bethmann-Hollweg informed Prince Buelow that,

he was charged to declare that the German Imperial Government would make itself fully and entirely responsible to the royal Italian Government that the convention to be concluded between Italy and Austria-Hungary would be put into execution faithfully and loyally as soon as peace was concluded.

**Germany's guarantee not seriously regarded.** The professions of good faith made by Austria-Hungary and the guarantee offered by Germany did not impress Sonnino deeply. In a despatch

<sup>1</sup> *Italian Green Book*, Document 48.

to the Italian Ambassadors at Berlin and Vienna, he remarked:

I am willing to believe that Austria, victorious, would at the end of the war faithfully carry out a pact which should in a certain measure have helped her to conquer; but it would be contrary to human nature that the Austrian public, and with it the Austrian Parliament, on the day when Austria issued vanquished from the war and was compelled to cede several provinces to the victorious enemy, would not revolt against the cession of other territories to a nation which had taken no part in the struggle, and when events would have proved that the abstention of this nation had not sufficed to give to them a fortunate turn. The guarantee is of value on the hypothesis of a victorious Germany, which presupposes the victory of Austria; but it would be of less value in the event of both being beaten.<sup>1</sup>

**Austria-Hungary's proposals.** Not until the Italian Government had twice intimated its wish to break off the negotiations, under the conviction that Austria-Hungary was not disposed to arrive at an acceptable basis of agreement, did Baron Burian, with the express authority of the Emperor, make a definite statement of what his government might be induced to do to satisfy the desires of Italy.<sup>2</sup> He proposed,

<sup>1</sup> *Italian Green Book*, Document 54.

<sup>2</sup> Sonnino wrote in a telegram to the Italian Ambassadors at Vienna and Berlin, 26th January, 1915: "I am doing all that I

that Italy should bind herself to remain neutral, with a benevolent attitude towards Austria-Hungary, from the political and the economic point of view, throughout the war; and that during the whole of the war she should allow to Austria-Hungary entire liberty of action in the Balkans, renouncing in advance all further compensation for the advantages, territorial or other, which Austria-Hungary might eventually derive from such liberty.

This stipulation was not, however, to refer to Albania, as to which there was an accord between Austria-Hungary and Italy, and the decisions of the London Conference<sup>1</sup> would remain in force.

If Italy would subscribe to these stipulations then Austria-Hungary would consent to a cession of territory in the southern Tyrol, including the city of Trent. "The detailed delineation of this territory should be carried out in such a manner as to take account of the strategic necessities

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can to tranquillize opinion, to moderate desires and hopes, to advise confidence in our diplomacy; but I am unfortunately convinced that while at home I am accumulating grave responsibilities on my head, I shall see all our efforts abroad end without practical result. Despite the indubitable good faith of Prince Buelow and the German Government, which I willingly recognize, we thus remain completely the butt of Austrian foolery."—*Italian Green Book*, Document 15.

<sup>1</sup> This Conference was begun in December, 1912, and continued until the signing of the treaty of peace after the first Balkan War. It was then that Serbia obtained a part of Macedonia, which should have been annexed to Bulgaria under the terms of the Balkan League.

created by the change of frontier and by the economic interests of the population.”<sup>1</sup>

**The cession of the Trentino alone insufficient.** The Italian Cabinet-Council found these propositions much too vague and much too uncertain, and also absolutely inadequate. Sonnino informed Buelow that he did not believe that Italian popular opinion would be content with the sole acquisition of the Trentino. There could be no durable understanding between Austria and Italy without the final elimination of the irredentist shibboleth: “Trent and Trieste!” In a telegram to the Duke of Avarna he wrote: “The geographical situation of Italy prohibits her absolutely (while professing to be neutral) from favouring one group of the belligerents.” As to the maintenance of the Austro-Italian accord regarding Albania, he said: “Actually it is not possible for Italy to grant to Austria liberty of action in the Balkans without obtaining from her in return that she completely renounce her interest in Albania.”

<sup>1</sup> The idea of Prince Buelow was that Austria-Hungary should cede what had anciently constituted the princely bishopric of Trent, which had been part of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, and was annexed to the province of the Tyrol in comparatively recent times. When Napoleon I. set up the first kingdom of Italy, he detached the Trentino from the Tyrol. The Prince remarked to Signor Sonnino that it would be well to spare the sensibilities of the Austrian Emperor, among whose titles was that of Count of the Tyrol. Therefore, he counselled Sonnino to learn by research exactly what the boundaries of the ancient bishopric of Trent were.



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There were minor divergences of view regarding questions of public debt relevant to the transference of territorial sovereignty and of governmental or crown property.

It was not until the 2d of April that the Rome Government could learn from the Austro-Hungarian Government what cession of territories it professed a disposition to make. They were indicated in the Austrian memorandum as follows:

The territories which Austria-Hungary would be disposed to cede to Italy, on the conditions indicated, would comprise the districts of Trent, Rovereto, Riva, Tione (with the exception of Madonna de Campiglio and its environs), as well as the district of Borgo. In the valley of the Adige the frontier would follow the Lavis towards its source, that locality being left to Italy.

**Details of Italy's conditions.** Hereupon the Italian Foreign Minister formulated for the first time in detail the concessions on the part of Austria-Hungary which his government "deemed indispensable to the creation between the two states of a normal and stable situation of reciprocal cordiality and of possible future co-operation in the direction of their common interests of general policy."

1. Italy required the cession of the Trentino, with the frontiers possessed by the kingdom of Italy in 1811.
2. The eastern frontier should be retraced to her

advantage, to comprise within the ceded territory the cities of Gradisca and Goritz. Various strong positions in the Carnic Alps were to be included. The line should pass to the east of Plezzo and descend the valley of the Isonzo to Tolmino, and thence deflect eastward to Goritz and across the Carso heights, ending at the sea between Monfalcone and Trieste, near Nabresina.

3. The city of Trieste with the contiguous territory, including the judicial districts of Cape d'Istria and Pirano, should be constituted an autonomous and independent state, and its port should be free.

4. Austria-Hungary should cede to Italy the Curzola group of islands in the Adriatic, at mid-distance between Ragusa and Spalatro, and the Isle of Pelagosa, in the middle of that sea, opposite Mount Gargane, on one side, and the town of Macarska in Dalmatia, on the other.

5. Italy would immediately occupy the ceded territories; Trieste and its territory should be immediately evacuated by the Austro-Hungarian authorities, and all the land and sea troops whose homes were in the ceded regions should be released at once from the imperial service.

6. Austria-Hungary should recognize the full Italian sovereignty over Valona and its bay, including Sassano, with such portion of the contiguous territory as should be necessary to their defence.

7. Austria-Hungary should renounce all interest in Albania, as delimited by the London Conference.

**Undertakings on Italy's part.** Other articles of the proposed treaty prescribed the amnestying of

all military and political prisoners within the ceded territories and money payments by Italy to free those territories from their quota-part of the Austro-Hungarian debt and as indemnity for domanial properties of the crown.

Finally Italy would engage to maintain a perfect neutrality during the war with regard to Austria-Hungary and Germany, and would renounce all appeal in her favour to Article VII. of the Triple Alliance treaty, Austria-Hungary making the same renunciation with regard to the Italian occupation of the southern Sporades.

The Austrian response to this proposition did not cover the whole ground. Baron Burian at this time made no mention whatever, in his conversations with the Duke of Avarna, of the astonishingly audacious demand for the cession of the Curzola group of islands. Two weeks later he said that these islands, not to mention the fact that their population was purely Slavic, would constitute in the hands of Italy a strategic position which would dominate completely the upper Adriatic, where, as to Austria-Hungary, there could never be any further question of a balance of naval power; and that this position would be a constant menace of attack upon the adjacent coast.<sup>1</sup> Baron Burian offered a modification of the proposed cession in the Trentino region, but it was declared by the Italian Foreign Minister that this "failed to

<sup>1</sup> *Italian Green Book*, Document 74.

eliminate the great inconvenience of the present situation, whether from the linguistic or the ethnic point of view." To all the other demands Baron Burian answered in the negative.

There was some supplementary argument on the subject of the future destiny of Trieste. The economic considerations presented by Baron Burian would have been irrefutable if it had been proposed, in freeing the province and port from the authority of Austria-Hungary, to attach them to another country. But he exaggerated greatly when he said: "To divorce Trieste and its environs from Austria-Hungary, making them a separate state, would be to strike a mortal blow at their economic prosperity."<sup>1</sup>

The negotiations had now arrived at the point which had probably been fully foreseen by both the Powers, even at the beginning—that of utter failure. Both Germany and Austria-Hungary, on the one side, and Italy, on the other, appear to have been desirous of delaying a rupture, if rupture there was to be, for a certain length of time. As late as the 25th of April, however, Avarna informed Sonnino that "Baron Burian could not yet admit

<sup>1</sup> Francis Charmes: "Trieste will be the stumbling-block, for it is not alone Austria-Hungary that is interested; it is the sole port of the Germanic world on the Mediterranean, and Germany will never consent that Austria-Hungary shall cede it to Italy, or, if done, it would not be in good faith, but with the mental reservation that at a not distant day she will recover it, never again to relinquish it."

the eventuality of the Royal Government finding itself obliged to make war on Austria-Hungary, if its demands are not integrally accepted." The Imperial Government did not believe, then, that Italy was gravely in earnest in the stand which her ministers had taken for the full consummation of the work of national unification.

Sonnino sent to Avarna his final despatch on the subject of these negotiations on the 3d of May. He reviewed with singular clearness and conciseness the grounds of difference between the two Powers.

The Italian Government [he said in conclusion] renounces the hope of arriving at an accord and is obliged to withdraw all of the propositions which it has made to that end. It is equally useless to maintain the formal appearance of an alliance, destined only to conceal a reality of continued distrust and of daily divergence of view.

Hence Italy, confident in her good cause, affirms and proclaims that from this moment she resumes her full liberty of action, and she declares annulled and henceforth without effect her treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE GREAT MASS OF THE ITALIAN NATION SUPPORTS THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS POLICY OF WAR

Effect of the Development of Belligerent Operations on the Course of its Negotiations with the Central Powers—Tentative Understanding of Italy with Rumania—Vague Assurances on which it Rested—German Political Propaganda—Great Expenditure of German Gold in the Peninsula—Misconception of the Italian Character and Temperament—Public Horror at Teutonic *Schrecklichkeit*—Victor Emmanuel the Arbiter of the Nation's Destiny—The Salandra Cabinet, which Resigned in Consequence of German Machinations and the Intrigues of the Giolitti Following, Restored to Power, with Increased Evidence of Public Confidence—The Premier's Impressive Review of the Italo-Austrian Controversy—Impossible Terms Wittingly Proposed on Both Sides in Order to Gain Time.

DURING the course of the Italo-Austrian negotiations the Great War had already passed through several phases, and the balance of success and non-success had often shifted back and forth between the opposing groups of the belligerents. After the critical battles of the Marne, the Aisne, and the Yser, the Germans in Western Europe had been able to do but little except to hold, with slight variations of

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advance and regression on either side, usually annulling one another, their elaborately fortified line, extending through the north-eastern and northern zone of France and of western Belgium, from the Swiss border to the North Sea. In East Prussia, Poland, and Galicia they were beginning, with the Austrians, late in May, to turn the fortune of battle against the Russians. Lemberg, Przemyśl, and Tsernovich, which had been taken by the Tsar's swarming legions, were all again to be lost before many weeks, while Warsaw was much more gravely threatened than it had been by the earlier advance of the enemy. A marvellous retreat of the Russians, which was to be continued for several months, while they delayed in one chosen position after another the Austro-German oncoming, aroused the candid wonder of the world. Serbia, with forces vastly inferior in number had gloriously proved her superiority to Austria-Hungary in the individual prowess of her soldiers. Turkey had come early into the war,<sup>1</sup> at the behest and through the cajolery of Germany, and to the accompaniment of ignominious trickery. France and Britain were besieging the Dardanelles, the gateway of Constantinople and the Euxine, with both land and sea forces

<sup>1</sup> In October, 1914, though her acts of open hostility had begun in September, with the permission given to the German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, to pass into the Black Sea. France, Britain, and Russia declared war against her on the 30th of October.

**Germany earns the abhorrence of mankind.** Germany had earned the abhorrence and the hatred of mankind; and her name was everywhere a symbol of loathing and terror. All the world shuddered at the thought of what she might further do, by way of cruelty and oppression, if finally victorious. Belgium had been desolated with sword and fire and by cowardly fusillades; by the slaughter of inoffensive women, children, and old men; by the carrying away of many thousands into mean and harsh captivity; by most shameful pillage and wanton destruction of noble and venerable works of art and unique treasures of learning and literature. In no other war in the history of the world had such needless and barbarous havoc been wrought. The weaker governments weighed anxiously the chances of the great conflict; the strong, by increased acquaintance with the monstrous perversity of a nation which was crazed with the thirst for conquest, were stimulated to intenser efforts for self-preservation.

Germany had lastly inaugurated a war of cold-blooded and murderous piracy on the high seas, sinking without warning, and in many cases without care for the lives of hundreds of non-combatants which were placed in almost hopeless peril, merchant-ships of all sorts and of all nationalities, except her own and those of her Allies. The great steamship, the *Lusitania*, with some



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twelve hundred passengers and sailors, had been destroyed,<sup>1</sup> without a shadow of excuse or justification and in full violation of every humane principle and the most sacred of the laws of war.

**The riddle of the Balkans.** The diplomacy of the Balkan states other than Serbia relative to their possible participation in the war seemed to vary from day to day with the course of the campaign in Russia, Galicia, and Gallipoli. What Bulgaria, Rumania, and Greece might determine to do remained, during long months of tedious *pourparlers* between themselves and the Powers of the Triple Entente, a riddle which would have defied something even stronger than the Œdipean gift of divination.

Italy was peculiarly sensitive to every variation of the diplomatic situation in the Balkans. Her statesmen closely watched the currents of public thought in Greece, Bulgaria, and Rumania, and diligently sought, as did the agents of the other interested Powers, to penetrate the labyrinthine mysteries of Balkan statecraft. Great uncertainty existed at Petrograd,<sup>2</sup> London, and Paris, as to possible secret understandings or even treaties between those countries and Austria-Hungary and Germany. Even before the war, it had been many times positively stated that a secret diplomatic bond had been formed between Bulgaria and Turkey. By their attitude, Bulgaria, Greece,

<sup>1</sup> 8th May, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> Saint Petersburg.

and Rumania invited the offers and promises of the Great Powers in both hostile camps. It might be inferred that they were greedily desirous of ascertaining just how much their adhesion to one or the other cause would be worth to them, in financial subsidies and territorial accessions.

**Lack of clairvoyance and decision in the cabinets.** Russia, Britain, and France carried on negotiations with all of the Balkan states. It appeared that the Cabinet-Council both at Paris and at London lacked clearness of conception of the exact nature and proportions of this diplomatic task, as well as decision and positive judgment as to the nature and importance of the means that must be employed to induce Greece and Rumania to take part in the war, and Bulgaria to remain at least neutral. Behind the curtain of governmental discretion, also, there were conflicting motives among the non-Teutonic allies themselves, regarding the question as to how many nations, big and little, were to enjoy the right to be present at the board when the fruits of anticipated victory over the Central Empires and the Turks should be divided. For fear that there might be too many convives and because of reluctance to give to the weaker ones what would otherwise go to the stronger, the latter hesitated and appeared to begrudge even the offers which they had actually made. These, again, lacked precision and finality, and could not therefore produce that certain im-

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pression which would have been most convincing and most persuasive. Diplomacy of a more incisive and more emphatic character was sorely needed in this crisis.

**An Italo-Rumanian understanding.** It appeared that Italy and Rumania had arrived quite early at an informal diplomatic concert, which unfortunately, however, was vague as to its basis and was without binding force. Ethnically these two peoples had quite as much in common as the Russians and the southern Slavs and the sympathy between them was very strong. There was an original understanding between the cabinets of Rome and Bukharest under which the entrance of one of the two countries into the war was to be followed at a short interval by that of the other. The first supposition was that Rumania would move first; but the general course of events determined otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On this point Guglielmo Ferrero wrote while the action of Serbia's neighbours was still in the balance: "I am well assured that in the months preceding the declaration of war by Italy against Austria there were negotiations for a simultaneous intervention by the former and Rumania. They were so far advanced that the Italian Government expected that its own declaration of war would immediately follow that of Rumania. The disappointment of Italy was not the first whereof Rumania was the cause, for states which were fighting against the Teutonic empires. . . . In the situation created by the European War a unique occasion was offered to Rumania to complete her national unity—and opportunity which would not be repeated for centuries."

The suitable moment for Italy's decisive action naturally came at the climax of her diplomatic duel with Austro-Hungary. One of the strongest organs of Italian opinion then declared:

Italy cannot issue the same from the present crisis as she was before. To allow it to pass without bettering her frontiers, without realizing her aspirations, without raising her prestige, and without assuring her future would be suicide. To wait passively for her destiny to be accomplished would be to expect alms from other nations at a moment when the most cynical selfishness is triumphant.

**Differences among the leaders in Italy.** There had been wide differences among the political leaders in Italy as to whether she ought to depart from her strict neutrality, and, if so, when and under what conditions. As Holland and Belgium had been, so was Italy held fast in the commercial grasp of the Germans, permeated by the same insidious poison of alien enterprise, alien espionage, and alien corruption which had wrought such profound injury to France. The evil was even graver in Italy, because there the implied protection of the Triple Alliance permitted it to develop more openly and with less obstruction. It affected, indeed, all the political life of the country; but more especially was it employed, with reinforcement of emissaries of great acumen, some even of high rank, expressly selected by the Kaiser himself;

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first to prevent Italy from quitting the Triple Alliance; and, second, to insure her complaisant neutrality.

A curious misconception of the character and temper of the Italian people existed on the part of German and Austro-German statesmen. Unfortunately Italy had not yet fully attained to untrammelled popular representation.<sup>1</sup> The Salandra ministry, which was in power throughout the negotiations with Austria-Hungary, was popular and was in a very large sense the mouthpiece of the real spirit of the nation. But its command of the Chamber of Deputies was precarious. The agents of Austria-Hungary and Germany, with Prince Buelow as their visible chief, organized a diligent campaign of both public and secret influence, whereof the means, chiefly bribery of a lavish sort, were unavowable. If Italy could not be induced to aid the Central Powers, she might at least, they hoped, be prevented from turning against them.

**German intrigue overreaches itself.** Salandra, the Prime Minister, had declared: "Our neutrality

<sup>1</sup> " . . . The Italian Chamber of Deputies cannot really be said to represent public opinion. The government of the time being has altogether too much power to influence general elections, and the multiplicity of political groups in the Chamber confuses and disgusts a considerable number of voters in all constituencies. Many of these abstain from voting for any parliamentary candidate on the ground that one political party is more or less like another and it does not, therefore, very much matter which party it may be that succeeds in forming a government."—BAGOT.

must not remain inert and nerveless; it must be active and vigilant; it ought not to be impotent; it must be strongly armed and ready for any eventuality." In face of a refractory majority in Parliament, however, the Salandra ministry resigned. The pro-German intriguers were jubilant; but their battle was not won. Popular sentiment manifested itself irresistibly. The very provocation had been given which would precipitate the nation into action. Germany's offer to guarantee the good faith of Austria-Hungary in her tender of concessions that were only to be carried out after the war was treated with scathing contempt in the authoritative journals. A bitter cry of anger and disgust arose when at Berlin a member of the Reichstag added to Prince Buelow's suggestions a demand that Italy should formally recognize the German possession of Belgium. It would not have been safe for even the most conservative or the least assertive ministry openly to contemplate such a step. Opinion grew stronger day by day in favour of insisting that Austria-Hungary accept all of the Italian demands, without change or abatement. The leader of the native party of intrigue, Signor Giolitti, the former Premier, was the strongest of the parliamentarians. After the abrogation of the Triple Alliance treaty, war against Austria-Hungary having been determined upon, an agreement with the Triple Entente to co-operate against the

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common foe was signed. Giolitti, at the last moment, however, presuming upon a personal prestige which was indeed very great, tried by overturning the ministry to annihilate this entire programme and to bring about the acceptance of the Austro-Hungarian terms. In Greece, King Constantine by similar means (equally obedient to German cajolery and persuasion) had already defeated the popular will and had driven Venizelos, the patriotic Premier, from power.<sup>1</sup>

**Victor Emmanuel obeys the people's voice.** But Victor Emmanuel III., unlike Constantine, had shown from the commencement of his reign that he believed that the monarchy should be the frank expression of the people's will. Any other conception of his rôle as chief of state, indeed, would assuredly have been fatal to his dynasty, and would probably have converted Italy into a republic. The hour had come when the King must prove again whether he could make a heroic decision. Fortunately the example set by the Grecian monarch had put Italy upon her mettle. She was too proud of her own strength and of her own greatness to be willing to be cited as having followed in the faltering footsteps of what she regarded as a weak and immature state. History and posterity might pardon in Greece what they would not pardon in Italy. Such was the view which the Italian writers inculcated in the masses.

<sup>1</sup> March, 1915.

It had been said that Italy "was a democratic state, even more so in a sense, perhaps, than republican France; while the Central Empires were politically unfree, still based essentially upon royal and aristocratic domination of the people."

**Benefit of the long vigil in Italy.** In the half-century during which the Italians had enjoyed a régime which had grown gradually more and more liberal, they had formed an almost universal habit of thinking very largely for themselves. The question of *Italia irredenta*, although older than that of the "lost provinces" of Alsace-Lorraine, had preoccupied them more deeply and more passionately than the latter had the French. The resolve to fight for the national need had steadily matured in the conscience of the masses. They had fully seized the sinister meaning of a German hegemony in Europe.

This long vigil had been a blessing because, during the suspense, the national consciousness had developed, and every hour had afforded new reasons for the entry of the people, with an invincible purpose, into the fray. From the purely national problem of accomplishing the final unity of the motherland and gaining complete possession of her natural frontiers on land and sea, the people had been slowly but surely brought to consider another, the human or inhuman, aspect of the struggle. The Latin soul was shocked and it deeply revolted at the ruthless devast-



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ation of Belgium, the systematic "frightfulness"<sup>1</sup> of Germany's methods of barbarous warfare, the destruction of non-combatants in the *Lusitania*, and the unscrupulous use of poisonous gases against a most chivalrous opponent. Even in the hearts of the simplest Italian peasants, as in those of the most ardent nationalists, the aim of Italy became two-fold: not only was war necessary to make her greater, but it was necessary to make her greater in a better Europe, where such horrors would be rendered impossible, and a more just, more human order of things would be inaugurated.<sup>2</sup>

**Government empowered to make war.** When a factitious counter-majority caused the Salandra ministry to retire (probably the most national and the most representative that the kingdom had had since the days of the Risorgimento), the Italian King became the arbiter of his country's fate. He responded to what he knew to be in the hearts of his people. Salandra and his ministerial associates were asked to remain in office. The Chamber of Deputies rallied to the popular wish, and by an almost unanimous vote it entrusted to the government the necessary authority and means for making war. On the 23d of May, war was declared against Austria-Hungary. Both Germany and Austria-Hungary at once, as might have been expected, accused Italy of betrayal and trickery in her abandonment of the Triple Alliance

<sup>1</sup> (German) *Schrecklichkeit*.

<sup>2</sup> Guglielmo Emanuel.

at so critical a moment. But the accusation, like the similar one against Britain, when she declared her position in August, 1914, was diplomatic claptrap.

In a memorable discourse delivered at the Capitol in Rome on the 2d of June, Signor Salandra characterized with entire justice and candour the conduct of the Central Powers

Impartial history will state [he said] that Austria, having found in July and October, 1913, that Italy was hostile to her purpose of aggression against Serbia, tried, in the summer of 1914, in accord with Germany, the plan of surprising the other Powers and of confronting them with the accomplished misdeed.

**Italy underrated by Germany and Austria-Hungary.** The abominable crime of Sarajevo was exploited as a pretext. . . . Germany and Austria up to the last moment of their subsequent negotiations with us believed that they had to do with a harmless Italy, turbulent but not dangerous, capable of attempting to blackmail them, but never of maintaining her right by armed force; with an Italy who could be rendered impotent at the expense of some millions of money, and by interposing, by unavowable means and manoeuvres, between the government and the nation. Citizens and ministers of those countries have talked of the alliance which we abrogated, after they themselves had violated it, as of a sort of Providence which with widespread wings has protected Italy for so many years, and thanks to which the country has developed economically and has grown in terri-

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torial possessions. It is well to know, with precision of dates and acts, how in reality the Alliance has operated in these last years, what has been its true spirit, and how it has contributed to our sole territorial gain, that of Lybia. The constant suspicions in our regard, the hostile intentions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, are notorious. The chief of the Austrian general staff has constantly maintained that war with Italy was inevitable, as much because of the question of the unredeemed provinces, as because of what the Dual Monarchy aimed to do in the Balkan and Mediterranean regions.

**Long-cherished desire to weaken Italy.** Italy, he has further declared, desired to expand as soon as she was sufficiently prepared, and meanwhile opposed everything that Austria aimed to achieve in the Balkans. "Consequently" he said "we must crush her, so that we may have a free hand." And he deplored the fact that the attack upon Italy had not been made in 1907.<sup>1</sup> The Austrian Foreign Minister himself acknowledged that in the military party the opinion was widespread that the Italian kingdom ought to be weakened by war, because otherwise it would draw to itself the Italian provinces of the empire. Victory over Italy and her ruin would put an end to all the hopes of the "unredeemed"<sup>2</sup> populations. In the meantime and until the outbreak of war, which must be hastened by all possible means, because of the relative development of the military

<sup>1</sup> It was the common boast of members of the Austro-Hungarian staff that the campaign against Italy would be merely a "promenade to Milan."

<sup>2</sup> *Irridenti*.

strength of the two states, the Italian provinces must be oppressed and every claim as to national culture must be resisted.

Of Prince Buelow, Signor Salandra said:

He believed that Italy could be turned from her legitimate path by some millions evilly spent; by the influence of certain persons who were not longer in touch with the soul of the people<sup>1</sup>; by equivocal attempts (which, I hope and believe, were bootless) upon Italian public men.

**Explosion of popular patriotism.** He obtained precisely the opposite effect to that which he desired; there was an immense explosion of indignation in all Italy, not in the populace alone, but in the highest classes, in the noblest hearts; among those who are conscious of the dignity of the nation; among all the young manhood that holds itself ready to sacrifice the purest of its blood for the lofty ideal of the motherland. In this fine flame of patriotism all the internal barriers have been melted away, and in the entire nation a marvellous unity has been born, which will be our greatest force in the rude ordeal that must lead us to the realization of the supreme destinies of the motherland.<sup>2</sup>

The Italian people entered upon the war more light-heartedly, more calmly confident, perhaps, than any other nation. It was not because they

<sup>1</sup> This was a palpable allusion to Giolitti and his immediate political following.

<sup>2</sup> *Voix Italiennes*, Paris, 1915.

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comprehended the immense gravity of the step; but rather that they were in a better position than any other nation at the moment of decision to measure its exact meaning, and that they had awaited with marked self-control the moment when they might make the venture with almost perfect certainty as to the degree of risk which they were to face. Unity of sentiment, of which Salandra spoke in his address at the Capitol, had succeeded the diversity of opinion already noted, and this was due largely to the coincidence of two convictions: the one, that Austria-Hungary would never peacefully yield to Italy what the latter regarded as her sacred right; and the other that never again would so favourable a conjuncture present itself for Italy to attain to the positive enjoyment of this right. When once the national mind was made up, all semblance of hesitation vanished. Vast multitudes manifested their will for war at Rome and in other of the great cities. A thrill like that which had seized the French nation when it knew that the inevitable moment had arrived ran through the whole of Italy.

**Calm resolution of the people.** At the same time many who regarded the Italian nature as predominantly passionate were astonished to discover an underlying tranquillity, a stern resolution, cool as it was intense, showing that, in crises which are most deeply felt, peoples that are markedly dissimilar in their superficial traits may

bear a very close psychic resemblance, the one to the other.

The charge that Italy, during the long months of negotiation with the Central Empires, had tried to barter her neutrality against the possession of territories which she coveted falls completely to the ground, in face of the evidence. The motives of her demands were genuine and most weighty. An eminent contemporary writer said:

**The hidden spirit of the Italo-Austrian negotiations.** The war [between Italy and Austria-Hungary] was predestined. Neither the greatest good will nor the most scrupulous good faith could have prevented it. However repugnant to Italy, she could not avoid the months-long discussion of the seventh article of the treaty, much as she might seem in the meantime to be bartering away the life-blood of Serbia, drop by drop. No government could have allowed the rights in question to fall into implied proscription without incurring a most terrible responsibility. What recourse remained to Italy but to demand compensations which the Austro-Hungarian Government could not concede? I do not know whether Italy intentionally made impossible demands. Her demands could never have been accepted by Austria because only a state already beaten, already subjected, could have yielded them. The Italian Government had no choice but to ask impossible concessions, because it could not have accepted such as Austria could have made; it could not have accepted them because at this moment in the world's history there is no compensation imaginable

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for the blood of Serbia and for the blood of Belgium—which Italy must also have sold if she had sold that of Serbia. . . . Article VII. was conceived and formulated in good faith by persons who believed that it would be an added guarantee of the peace of Europe. Instead, it was the unchaining of war. History often plays such ironical tricks with men.<sup>1</sup>

The true key to the hidden spirit of the Italo-Austrian negotiations preceding the rupture of the alliance and the declaration of war is the fact that each Power wittingly prescribed conditions which the other could not grant without renouncing its set policy, long ordained, as to its political future. On the part of Italy, this would have meant slow suicide, if not rapid strangulation, besides the submission of her people, if, indeed, they did not rise in determined revolt against it, to the yet more abhorrent humiliation of seeming to countenance the unspeakable crimes of the Teutonic empires against mankind.

<sup>1</sup> Guglielmo Ferrero.

## CHAPTER XIV

### HOW TURKEY CAME INTO THE WAR, AND THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE BALKAN PROBLEM

Perfidious Tactics of the Sublime Porte—Cunning Efforts to Deceive the Powers of the Triple Entente—Position of the Germanic Dynasties in the Balkans—Bulgaria Ready to Form any Alliance for the Sake of Revenge—The Kaiser's Secret Promises—Constantinople—A Reconstituted Ottoman Empire in Asia Minor, Egypt, and Northern Africa—German Machinations in Rumania and Greece—Kings Ferdinand and Constantine under the Prussian Influence—Rumania's Excessive Demands upon Russia, France, and Britain and her Tragic Dilemma—Scheming of Bulgaria to Betray Russia—Lying Professions to the Triple Entente—Long Determined to Join Hands with Turkey and the Central Powers—Serbia Attacked without Diplomatic Warning—Ignominious Failure of the Diplomacy of the Triple Entente—Consequent Cabinet Changes and Changes of Policy—War Declared against Bulgaria by Britain, France, Russia, and Italy—French and British Troops go to Salonika and Serbia—Hesitancy of Greece—Constantine's Extra-Constitutional Course—Concessions to the Demands of the Allies in the Presence of Force—Rumania Waits and Watches, Prepared for Peace or War.

**T**HE Balkan riddle remained for some months longer unsolved. The diplomatic situation appeared each week more and more complex, more and more uncertain and confused.



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Its varying aspect bore a direct relation to the changing progress of the war.

This was the entirely logical result of the lack of clairvoyance and of harmonious decision on the part of the non-Germanic powers. They had commenced negotiations intended to bring Rumania, Bulgaria, and Greece into the war on their side, with a totally unwarranted assumption of their assured success. Too little importance was imputed to the dynastic influences which tended perpetually to thwart and to render impotent the aspirations and sympathies of the peoples of all three of those countries, and even less, apparently, to the pressure of intimidation on the part of the Central Empires.

**Warnings as to Bulgaria disregarded.** Even repeated reports from the most trustworthy sources that Bulgaria, early in the year 1914, immediately after the second Balkan war, had entered into a friendly understanding, perhaps a formal treaty, with Turkey, for ulterior purposes of offence and defence, were not regarded at Paris and London as serious warnings. Yet in Bulgaria's short history, since her political resurrection in 1878, she had never given the slightest evidence that she regarded the bonds of gratitude or of friendship as sacred. Russia and Rumania had liberated her from the yoke of the Turk. She had flouted the first by rejecting her benevolent tutelage in 1885; but a few months later when

Austria-Hungary intervened to check her victorious invasion of Serbia, she bowed readily enough to her mandate. Even then Austria-Hungary cherished the idea that if ever Serbia were to become the spoil of any Power, that Power must be herself. Otherwise she would not be able to pierce her way from the Danube to the Ægean Sea.\*

**Large Bulgarian ambitions.** Bulgaria's conception of her destiny was partly a reminiscence of her past greatness; but also it was based largely upon the territorial dimensions which the Tsar Alexander II. had generously sought to give her when, after her political syncope of five centuries, he proclaimed her an autonomous principality.†

\* Austria-Hungary sought always to keep Serbia in complete commercial dependence upon herself. She was determined to exclude her permanently from the sea. Nine-tenths of Serbia's foreign traffic crossed the frontier of Austria-Hungary, to whom it paid a heavy tribute. When Serbia disobeyed her formidable neighbour in any matter that was of some import to the latter, her trade through Austria-Hungary was stopped. When Serbia made a commercial treaty with Bulgaria the Vienna government vetoed it. Austria-Hungary strove to prevent anything like cordial relations from growing up between Bulgaria and Serbia. One of her latest efforts before the war was to induce Serbia to buy her inferior cannon, as Rumania had done, much to her subsequent regret.

† "The treaty of Berlin (1878) embroiled everything and settled nothing."—GABRIEL HANOTAUX. Bulgaria's delegates to the Berlin Congress had already the audacity to claim for her "a messianic rôle." Theirs was the first formal manifestation of pan-Slavism in the Balkans. It was also a symptom of that megalomania which was later to develop in her as a politico-moral disease as well as in Prussia.

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After her brilliant war against Serbia in 1885, her dream of exercising a political primacy over the whole of the Balkan Peninsula became more and more vivid. But in the meantime, her policy was for years subservient to that of Austria-Hungary. Her shiftiness in foreign policy, now proverbial, was shown later in an equal degree under Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, successor to Alexander of Battenberg,<sup>1</sup> by her abject reconciliation with Russia.<sup>2</sup> At the same epoch, Bulgaria also gained the good graces of the Sultan, her ancient lord and suzerain, and gradually she procured for herself all the attributes of independence except the formal one of recognition.<sup>3</sup>

**The Macedonian question kept alive.** Before this was obtained, after 1908, Ferdinand, while secretly doing everything that was possible to keep the Macedonian question alive, by passively encouraging the malefactions of the *cometidjis*<sup>4</sup> (who by killings and outrages of their own gave continued pretext for massacre, burning, and pillage

<sup>1</sup> September, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> 1896.

<sup>3</sup> Ferdinand flattered the Sultan in the first instance by deferring to his approval his own elevation as a vassal prince to the throne of Bulgaria. Before that he had held the simple rank of lieutenant in the Austro-Hungarian army.

<sup>4</sup> Armed civilian bands, ostensibly devoted to the patriotic redemption of the oppressed Turkish provinces inhabited by their countrymen, but quite as much given to brigandage and needless crime.

by the Turkish soldiery<sup>1</sup>), carefully maintained the most correct diplomatic attitude towards all the Powers (including the Sublime Porte) with which his government had direct relations.

The equilibrium in the East immediately before the Great War was most unstable. Turkey had been deprived of all influence in Europe. "She was dominated by politicians who had only appetites to satisfy," and was mined by intrigues of German and Austro-German plotters and spies.

Germany and Austria-Hungary had plainly counted upon the co-operation of both Turkey and Bulgaria, even before they decided upon their unprovoked assault upon Serbia. Rumania, if she would not join forces with them for the elimination of Serbia, was to be awed at least into passivity. Her lines of communication might be used for the free passage of troops and supplies to the battle-grounds of the Balkans. Greece would hardly dare to offer positive obstruction to the plans of the Central Powers if, with Turkey and Bulgaria against her, she were completely isolated, except as to the sea.

**Moral suasion by France and Britain.** In the first months of the war Britain and France used only the mildest forms of suasion to keep Turkey

<sup>1</sup> Helim Pacha said of the mixed peoples under his authority in Macedonia: "I am the keeper of madmen. I prevent all these maniacs from devouring one another." If only he had prevented it! Even Christians massacred one another.

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and the neutral Balkan states from falling into the orbit and obeying the bellicose impulsion of Austria-Hungary and Germany. Turkey was most under suspicion; Bulgaria, Rumania, and Greece, scarcely at all.

The Turks were the real creators of the Eastern Question. It had existed since their advent in Europe; but it was in the eighteenth century that, in its strictly modern form, it began seriously to trouble the Great Powers. Ever since the time of Peter the Great, when Russia really became a European Power, the Muscovite statesmen had striven to solve it to their profit.

To become a European Power she had been obliged to reckon with Prussia; to solve the Eastern Question she had to reckon with Austria. It was thus that Prussia, who then had no direct interest in Oriental affairs, was led to play a rôle which often was preponderant; and that, since Austria had a concern in all the great European matters, there was none of these that did not bring more or less into play her influence in the East, or that was not subject more or less to the influence of Eastern complications.

Thus Albert Sorel indicated succinctly what there was in the Eastern Question that constituted its essential character. His definition pointed to European interests in the East other than those of Austria-Hungary. But it recognized the historical precedence of the latter. The interest of Russia

lay in her expansion towards the open, temperate seas and in the almost limitless possibilities of commercial development concomitant to it; the interest of Austria was covetousness, as well as her guaranteed security on the Danube, the natural frontier of her Empire; Germany, prolific, trafficking, industrious, desired an outlet to the Mediterranean; England had ever in mind her great trade interest in the Indies; and France the balance of maritime power and the liberty of navigation.

**How Turkey held the balance for years.** By allying herself now with one, now with another, of the Great Powers, thus checking, as they became manifest, the ambitions which most menaced her, Turkey for many years maintained the equilibrium that was essential to the peace of the world.<sup>1</sup> The alliance of Austria-Hungary and Germany with Turkey, which was revealed in the first months of the Great War, was indeed astonishing; yet it was quite logical as consequent upon events of the previous three decades in the Balkans. Austria was led to this alliance by her policy of constant hostility to the Slavs, both within and without the Empire, and her desire to dominate the East; and Germany edged her on in this fatal course with the firm intention of ultimately occupying herself the commanding place which thus was preparing. It was by this inspiration that Turkey, just prior to the open avowal of her alliance with the Ger-

<sup>1</sup> J. Aulneau, *La Turquie et la Guerre*.

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manic empires, made tentative efforts, incongruous as the idea then appeared, to reconstitute a Balkan league, with herself as a principal member.

**Abandonment of ancient friendships.** Such in general is the explanation of the ostensible friendship of the two strongest military empires of modern times with the one remaining theocratic empire, the last triumph of semi-barbarism, which was tottering to its fall. In assuming this new external attitude, Turkey had abandoned her centuries-old intimacy with France, begun under François I., which, with but a few brief intervals, had seen no break of its continuity for four hundred years, and her honoured friendship with Great Britain, dating from the time of Queen Elizabeth,<sup>1</sup> who had asked the Sultan, with real or assumed naïvety, to sign capitulations in favour of her subjects on the ground that both he and she had "the mission to fight idolators." Under the unsteady and impulsive direction of the party of the Young Turks, the Ottoman Government threw away the sound and trustworthy relations upon which it had depended so long, and which had at least been benevolent and protective, if at times selfish and from timid motives often over-tolerant or over-indulgent, in order to lend itself to the grandiose schemes of Germany and Austria-

<sup>1</sup> In 1580 diplomatic relations were established between England and the Ottoman Empire by the sending of William Harebone to Constantinople as Ambassador.

Hungary, the full ultimate range of which could scarcely have been grasped by its elder counsellors else they would never have acquiesced in them so meekly. And this is the truly amazing phase of the whole matter.

It is difficult to conceive how Turkey could have mistaken the danger to herself, whatever plausibility there may have been in the promises lavished upon her to the effect that her diminished empire would be rebuilt by restoring to her Egypt and the Barbary states, a part of Greece, the Grecian isles, and possibly Cyprus and the Transcaucasus.

**Dazzled by the Kaiser's histrionic art.** It is equally difficult to understand how her instructed classes could have been dazzled, as they obviously were, by the proceedings of the Hohenzollern Kaiser in her regard.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "One of the aims of the Germans in forcing the Turks to join them was to obtain possession of Constantinople for themselves; and they hoped also to annex Asia Minor altogether, or at least to take the Turks under their protection as a semi-dependent state. Germany's unstinted support of Abd-ul-Hamid, her cruel abstention from protesting against outrages on the Armenians in Constantinople itself, her lavish expenditure of money in order to obtain support for her railway and other projects, the Kaiser's bid for the leadership of the Moslem world, the readiness with which she furnished soldiers for the training of the Turkish army, the unwillingness which she and Austria showed to join the other Powers in attempting to secure protection for life and property in Macedonia, all point to a design by which not only was Germany to obtain a dominant influence in Turkey, but should be placed in a position to do what she liked in Asia Minor."—SIR EDWIN PEARs (Resident in Constantinople for forty years).



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Nothing better symbolized Germany, marching to the conquest of the world [wrote a distinguished French statesman<sup>1</sup>], than the journey of her Emperor to Palestine, his intoning of Luther's hymn on the Mount of Olives, and his inaugurating of the Church of the Redeemer while wearing helmet and cuirass, with an embroidered stuff of white, gold-bespangled silk covering him from neck to heels.<sup>2</sup>

It was the Kaiser's purpose on this occasion to lay the foundation of a useful friendship and alliance between his own country and Turkey; and he succeeded. At Constantinople he embraced the "Red Sultan" and "was greeted as the successor of Frederick Barbarossa, who had preceded him there by seven hundred years; and already he was proclaimed as Hadji Mehmet Ghillioun, the future Islamic Emperor, called to reign over the harems of the East."

**Turkey a "predestined prey."** Turkey [wrote Stephen Pichon again] was the designated prey of the Central Empires. She could do no less than submit to them. It was from this corrupted body that the germs of death disseminated abroad, infecting every quarter of the globe. To escape them, it would have

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Pichon, former Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> The Kaiser's two visits to Turkey were made in 1889 and 1898. He made his theatrical entry into Jerusalem in the costume of Lohengrin, through a gap expressly cut for him in the ancient city wall. He visited also with great ostentation the tomb of Saladin.

been necessary to restore to Turkey her life and health, and with them her independence. There were those who had tried to do this but had failed. The disease was perhaps too far advanced; its ravages already too great.<sup>1</sup>

An heroic intellectual and moral effort was made in 1876 under the leadership of Midhat Pacha, "a passionate and disinterested servant of his country's need," the Toussaint 'Ouvverture of the movement of the so-called Young Turks. He and his party were enamoured of Western culture and of Western political systems. Abd-ul-Aziz, hostile to a radical re-making of the state, was set aside; Mourad V. reigned a few months in his place and then Abd-ul-Hamid, who was to gain the bloody soubriquet of the "Red Sultan," was called to the throne. Midhat in a sense had been the cause of Abd-ul-Hamid's elevation, and was feared and hated by him accordingly. Then was proclaimed the constitution of 1876, which was never really enforced, and one of the most atrocious reigns was inaugurated that history has known.

<sup>1</sup> There had been several sincere reform movements in Turkey; but they were crushed by the combined hostility of the theocracy, the bureaucracy, and the army. In effect they merely reinforced the tyranny of the functionaries and the Musulmans. Treitschke declared that Turkey was incorrigible. The Ottoman system, he said, could not be reformed, but only overthrown. The opinion of Ernest Denis was somewhat different: "The reforms inaugurated at Constantinople were only a mask under which was hidden a ferocious nationalism."

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**The farce of constitutional reform.** Later there was the farcical promulgation of laws ostensibly conferring equal rights upon all the dwellers in the Ottoman Empire, irrespective of creed, or race; but these again were never executed. The Sultan rid himself of his liberal advisers and functionaries. Midhat was accused, condemned, strangled. In the twenty-two years of Abd-ul-Hamid's reign the six Great Powers in the interest of humane civilization attempted repeatedly a Platonic interference in the internal affairs of the Empire. The fruits of such interference were never appreciable. Russia alone produced a practical result by her war of 1877-78. After that, government by massacre and by rapine went on from bad to worse until the Young Turks achieved their revolution in 1908, overturned Abd-ul-Hamid, and enthroned Mehmet V. They were a political minority, but were at first irresistible, by reason of their intelligence, their initiative, and their energy, in a land of intellectual indolence and moral indifference. The leaders had lived and studied in France and Germany, and they had assimilated, although too hastily, the elements of Western culture. They were crammed with academic theories and with political conceptions. But their system was vitiated at its very base by the absence of practical governmental method. Their presumption was equalled only by their inexperience. Like the French revolutionists who prepared the

way for the Terror, their intentions were of the best. They were ardent patriots, full of rhapsodical ideas of the grandeur of Islam, and of the speedy and splendid restoration of its ancient virility and power.

**The Young Turks fail in all their promises.** With the corrupt Europe of the twentieth century as a background, the Turkish people, in their private manners and in the sincerity of their spiritual belief, might well have been deemed virtuous by the unbiassed observer; they had unutilized energies and a neglected potentiality; but no chief. The Young Turks surrounded themselves at first with men of the Old Turk party, in order to supply their own deficiencies; but there was no assimilation of the two. Soon the attempted rule of reason gave way, as it did in France in 1792, to that of sanguinary force. The year 1909 was memorable for its public and private hangings, as well as for its massacres, those of the Christians at Adana being the worst that Turkey even had yet seen. Martial law, absolute despotism, and the oligarchic dictation of a party were the outcome. Mehmet V. did not govern, or even rule: he presided in a state of moral inertia. The Parliament newly established was powerless. In the Committee of Union and Progress, the directing nucleus of the party of the Young Turks, whose secret functions resembled those of the Council of Ten in the degenerate Venetian oligarchy, there was the

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constant clashing of cliques and the malignant weaving of cabals. The revolution of the Young Turks, the last hope of Eastern liberalism, had utterly failed in its promise. This crisis of political ill-health was the great opportunity for Germany and Austria-Hungary. Their preparations for making the much-talked-of *Drang nach Osten* a practical reality were, however, rudely arrested by the Italo-Turkish War of 1911 and the Balkan wars of 1912-13.

**Prolongation of the "Sick Man's" life.** These seemed a superfluous iteration of the long series of signals given by Providence or fate of the approaching dismemberment of the "Sick Man of Europe." But the iteration was too advanced for the satisfaction of the Central Powers, who wished to preside alone at the pleasurable postmortem operation. They eagerly promoted, therefore, the hasty peace after each of those wars as the sole escape from a narrow dilemma. A moribund Turkey was still necessary to their own grandiose schemes. A dead empire divided piecemeal among them and their great rivals would render those schemes unrealizable, as much so as a journey to the moon.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *L'Europe et la Jeune Turquie*, René Pinon, Paris, 1914; *La Révolution Turque*, Victor Bérard, Paris, 1909. *La Mort de Stamboul*, Victor Bérard, Paris, 1913; *Les Réformes en Turquie d'Asie*, L. de Contenson, Paris, 1913; *Les Causes et les Conséquences de la Guerre*, Yves Guyot, Paris, 1915.

The political power of Turkey had been built up by the spirit of proselytism and the spirit of conquest,<sup>1</sup> and she had lost both. Unfortunately for her, her theocratic organization remained, and this was essentially antagonistic to the modern ideals of civilization. The character of the nation was virtually immutable; its rule of life inexorably exclusive. The Koran commanded the differentiation of the Moslem from all other peoples. Hence, while the foundations of Turkish society, were unchanged, there could be no hope whatever that any species of sane reform could have definitive results. Yet nothing else could have saved the nation—if that were indeed possible. New conquests could give it only a temporary stimulus.

**Sowing the seeds of future trouble.** The greed and subserviency of Britain and France, at the Berlin Congress in 1878, had rendered easy the first steps towards that astounding state of things which made possible in 1914 the turning against them of the Turkish power, in conjunction with that of the Germanic empires. As the price of their adhesion to Bismarck's plan, whereby Austria-Hungary obtained her first strong footing in the heart of the Balkans, they had gotten Egypt and Cyprus, and Tunisia. It was Germany who thus arranged matters at Turkey's expense, while

<sup>1</sup> "The Turkish Government is an army encamped." This is in a sense true today, though not in the same degree as when the Turks were still a nomadic nation.

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serving up to Russia, Rumania, and Bulgaria the bitter meat of disappointment; but she herself took nothing. Germany could hypocritically declare that she was the best friend of the Ottoman nation, and in that quarter find belief.<sup>1</sup> By every diplomatic blandishment, by every device of seductive finance, and by the lure of military and political ambition, she fascinated the Ottoman spirit, with steady and fatal persistence, as does the serpent of the jungle its natural prey. The Turkish army was placed in the hands of German officers for reorganization and retraining. Six thousand German subalterns were incorporated in it. Turkey with fulsome expressions of amity borrowed money in large sums in France. This was expended in Germany in payment for cannon and other arms. The Sublime Porte, always acting under German suggestion, had the effrontery to ask for a further loan at Paris in the early

<sup>1</sup> Systematic flattery of the Turks by German writers and statesmen began more than three decades before they allied themselves to the Central Empires. It was Bismarck who declared: "The Turk is the only gentleman in the East." Paul Rohrbach, in a book which had nearly a hundred editions, wrote: "Between the German and the Turkish nature there is, if not a profound kinship, at least a certain degree of affinity. . . . The Turks are warlike by instinct, and in contact with the western civilization they become rationalist. They represent the chief material and moral force in the East. Theirs is a land where German thought (after the coming war) may have a great future, from the point of view of colonial transplantation as well as of political domination and moral inoculation.

part of 1914, presumably knowing full well that the Great War was at hand. All of the native newspapers were virtually under German control. Flattery and corruption made all the higher officials of the Sultan the serviceable creatures of the Kaiser.

**Germany gives countenance to massacre.** The moral assimilation of Turk and Prussian proceeded apace. What a distinct contrast to their outward relationship in 1877 when Bismarck was watching sympathetically the struggle in the Balkans against Ottoman misrule and wrote to King Wilhelm: "In the face of such cruelty it is difficult to preserve a diplomatic calm. These events are a testimony for the Russians, who are the true champions in this war of the Christian religion against barbarism unchained." Turkey was guilty after 1877 of even greater wrongs, of worse massacres than ever before, and yet under Wilhelm I.'s grandson Germany became her familiar friend and ally! Not only did the Kaiser view with politic composure the enormities committed by the Turks in Armenia and Macedonia, but certain of his officers who were serving in the Turkish army had a degree of responsibility therein. Under Abd-ul-Hamid in 1903 the massacres of Macedonian Bulgars had been directed by Major von Goeben, who afterwards put an end to his life.

**Moral subjection of Turkey.** To complete the



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moral subjection of Turkey, the ablest of the Kaiser's diplomatists, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, was installed in Constantinople, quite as much to give counsel to the leaders of the Young Turk party who filled the ministerial offices and to direct the foreign policy of the government as to perform the nominal functions of an ambassador. Bieberstein had accomplished his work there; the Sublime Porte had become almost an auxiliary of the Imperial Chancellery at Berlin, when the darkening of the international horizon led to his selection as ambassador at London, where his astute knowledge of politics and men should, in the Kaiser's view, have tended strongly to deter Britain, in the event of war between the Central Empires on the one hand and France and Russia on the other, from taking an active part in favour of the two latter. Bieberstein, however, died suddenly before he had wholly taken up the task newly assigned to him, the most important of his really notable career. Bieberstein, as political mentor to the Young Turks, and der Goltz, as their guide in the modern art of war, had fully prepared the way for the practical participation of the Ottoman power in the Austro-German enterprise in the Balkans.

**Turkish belief in German triumph.** Constantinople was obsessed with exaggerated notions of Germany's military strength, as of her political prestige, and was thoroughly convinced that with

the aid of Austria-Hungary she would readily triumph over France, Russia, Britain, and Serbia. In the meantime, Belgium had already been largely overrun by Wilhelm II.'s murderous hordes; Namur had fallen; Antwerp was threatened, and the battle of Charleroi had forced the French armies to retire, slowly and defiantly, towards Paris and the Marne. The subsequent emphatic defeat of the Germans in the valley of the Marne was pictured at Constantinople as a mere strategic withdrawal, and the dogged fighting on the new lines along the Aisne, the Somme, and the Yser, as being uniformly in their favour. The Turks were entirely persuaded, as indeed at that moment was a great part of the rest of the world, that Calais was doomed and that England would inevitably be invaded. It was demonstrated to their satisfaction that their entry into the war, by drawing the Russians in larger numbers than hitherto into the Transcaucasus, would relieve the Germans and Austro-Hungarians of the pressure of great bodies of troops and thus render the conclusive victory in the West more certain.

France had promised to guarantee the territorial integrity of Turkey, if she remained neutral, and had declared, in conjunction with Britain,<sup>1</sup> that no change would be made in that case in the status of Egypt, which, while administered exclusively by the latter, was still under the nominal suzerainty of the Sultan.

<sup>1</sup> 7th August, 1914.

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In the meantime Germany and Austria-Hungary had increased their offers to the Sublime Porte. It was then that they informed the Sultan's representatives that he would again rule over the Grecian isles and even a part of Greece, as his ancestors had done. They promised to Bulgaria, Macedonia; to Rumania, Bessarabia, and even to Greece certain islands which the Western allies had hitherto refused her, as the price of her aid in the war. The apparent inconsistency of these offers did not abash the Berlin and Vienna governments. They were like the reckless player who adds to the stakes before him by borrowing from his neighbours, right and left, trusting to fortune to see to it that he can pay, or, if not that, at least evade his debt.

**Division in the Ottoman counsels.** There was evident division in the Ottoman ministerial counsels. The Grand Vizier inspired in the ambassadors of the anti-German Powers a belief in the sincerity of his professed wish for peace and of his repeated declarations that Turkey was in no sense inimical to them and would remain neutral. But Enver Pasha and other of the younger statesmen were wildly bent on leading the nation whither they would. The Grand Vizier's promises were often belied as soon as they were uttered. The government violated almost daily, in various ways, either furtively or openly, its pledge of neutrality. Germany's disturbing hand could be seen in the

incoherence, the illogicalness, the self-contradiction, and the perfidy of these acts. The Turkish army had begun to prepare for war on the 4th of August, the date of Britain's declaration against Germany, even while the Grand Vizier was giving pacific assurances. This military step, he later explained, was a simple precaution against surprises by Russia or Bulgaria—the latter in an effort to re seize Adrianople.

There were four full months of cunning, although clumsy, dissimulation on the part of the government of the Sublime Porte before it unmasked.

**False purchase of German warships.** Two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, had taken refuge in the Dardanelles early in August, to escape pursuit by the British, after having bombarded two defenceless French towns on the African coast; and they remained there in violation of treaty stipulations.<sup>1</sup> It was the prescribed duty of Turkey to prevent their entrance to the Straits. Failing in this, Turkey was bound, under the Hague agreement,<sup>2</sup> as well as under established international practice, to compel their departure within twenty-four hours; or, again, if the German commanders refused to obey, to cause the ships to be dismantled and to intern their officers and crews.

<sup>1</sup> Treaties of 1841 and 1856, and the London agreement of 1871.

<sup>2</sup> 18th October, 1907.

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The *Goeben* and *Breslau*, while approaching Constantinople, committed belligerent acts against a French vessel, destroying her telegraphic apparatus, and treated other vessels bearing the French, British, Italian, Greek, and Russian flags as if in the exercise of a right of surveillance and of search on the high seas, notwithstanding that they were within the Turkish jurisdiction. The protests of the Triple Entente were met by the prompt asseveration by the Porte that it had bought the cruisers of Germany, owing to its own prospective naval strength having been greatly diminished by the action of the British Government in seizing for its own use two Turkish warships, yet unpaid for, which were being constructed in England. The purchase of the German cruisers, when Britain, France, and Russia were at war with Germany, was fraudulent and void, and distinctly opposed to international precedent.<sup>1</sup>

**Credulity of the non-German Powers.** Turkey insisted upon her good faith, and declared, by the lips of Rifaat Pasha, her Ambassador at Paris, that the purchase of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* "did not imply any act of complicity, nor of duplicity, nor the least hostile or even unfriendly intent on the part of Turkey."<sup>2</sup> Each one of

<sup>1</sup> Bruntschli, *Le Droit International Codifié*. Bulmerincq, *Déclaration de Londres Relative aux Droits de la Guerre Maritime* (1909).

<sup>2</sup> *Le Temps*, Paris, 15th August, 1914.

these conjoined denials was false, as well as the added declaration: "We have not the slightest intention of taking part in the European War."

It was puerile on the part of the Turkish Government to expect that these statements would be believed. And yet they were believed by the chiefs of the British Government, and its representative at Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> And this gullibility on their part, it must be said, was equally puerile.

**Increasing evidences of evil intent.** Turkey promptly and glibly apologized for the hostile acts committed in her waters. But simultaneously she began herself a series of vexatious and unfriendly proceedings, expressly intended, it seemed, to irritate the anti-German Powers. By the invitation of the government, a British mission in Turkey, with Admiral Limpus in command, was specially engaged in reorganizing and instructing the navy. The British Admiral and his staff, on the 15th of August, were abruptly replaced by Ottoman officers. Explosive mines were floated about this time before the entrance to the Straits. The forts of the Dardanelles were manned with German soldiers. At Smyrna, British and French subjects were seriously molested by the Mussulman authorities. Turkish officers seized horses for war purposes in the stables of the French consul, and the military governor tore up his written protest to

<sup>1</sup> Second British *Blue Book*, Document 18.

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his face. German officers, soldiers, and marines continued to come to Constantinople by way of Bulgaria, and artillery by way of Rumania. The Grand Vizier, an old man, belonging to the conservative political element, professed to know none of these facts, and assured the British Ambassador that the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* would not enter the Black Sea, so long as they were commanded and manned by Germans. The British Ambassador still reported to the London Foreign Office that he believed in the Grand Vizier's sincerity! Lying promises were made that certain offensive acts would be undone; but other acts, even more offensive, and more openly significant of an ulterior hostile and treacherous purpose, immediately followed. At the end of August, the German General, Liman von Sanders, was designated by the Turkish Government as commander-in-chief of its forces. Two months previously he had been removed from the command of the army corps stationed at Constantinople because of the protests of France, Russia, and Britain. After a show had been made of withdrawing the German crews and officers from the *Goeben* and *Breslau* they were again embarked upon them in part, and fresh munitions were taken aboard, while German officers and marines were daily added to the forces of the Turkish navy proper, and were constantly arriving in Constantinople by way of Bulgaria and Rumania. German

warships were ready to convoy Ottoman troops to points on the Asiatic coast. The fortifications near Constantinople and on the Tchataldja line of defence, which had figured so tragically in the first Balkan War, were strengthened in great haste.

**Abrogation of the capitulations.** Up to this moment, the comedy of fair promises and plausible protestations by the Sublime Porte had continued. But the Sublime Porte grew more and more audacious in proportion as the position of France in the face of the Teutonic advance in the north appeared more critical. The party of the Young Turks triumphed completely over the conservative factions collectively designated as the Old Turks. On the 9th of September the government announced that the time-honoured Capitulations<sup>1</sup> (agreements with Foreign Powers whereby their subjects in Turkey were entitled to special juridical protection under a code administered by consular courts) were to be abolished. A Turkish statesman had confessed that jurisprudence was "bankrupt" and that the law in his country was "dead." The Western Powers, although they had looked for the abolition, sooner or later, of the Capitulations, under the pretended *régime* of modernization instituted by the Young Turks, were yet completely taken by surprise by the manner in which

<sup>1</sup> The Capitulations, originating under the Greek emperors, were confirmed anew to foreign colonists in Turkey by Mahomet the Great, the conqueror of Constantinople.



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it was accomplished. Their protests were vain. Still Sir Edward Grey and the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sazonof, retained an absurd faith in the good intentions of the Young Turks. They even made to them fresh conciliatory proposals, conditioned as an earnest of its loyalty and amity, on the dismissal of the German officers, soldiers, and sailors from the Ottoman service.

**The Sublime Porte unmasks.** The response of the Sublime Porte was the instant augmentation of the duties on imports by sea, a measure calculated to work direct and grave injury to the subjects of the protesting Powers. Another surprise followed this. The foreign postal service had been, since its establishment, in the hands of the western governments. Turkey now took possession of it, and this meant, so far as alien residents (Germans excepted) were concerned, its virtual suppression, an act quite as sudden as the abrogation of the Capitulations, and even more insolent.

The Porte tried no longer even to save appearances. Under the orders of the German, von Sanders, the placing of the army on a war footing was continued and other bellicose preparations went forward apace. At the end of September, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* passed through the Bosphorus into the Black Sea, to join the Sultan's squadron, which was commanded by the German Admiral, Souchon, Chief of the Turkish navy. The Porte ordered the closing of the Dardanelles to

merchant vessels, thus stopping the transport of foodstuffs from Russia, Rumania, and Bulgaria to Great Britain and other western lands. At the same time its decision to abrogate the peculiar privileges enjoyed for centuries by the inhabitants of the Mount Lebanon region, under the protection of France, was also abruptly made known.

**The Turkish agreement with Germany.** The Russian Ambassador, de Giers, on the 16th of October, informed his government that an agreement had been signed by Turkey wherein she engaged to move with her army and marine against the anti-German Allies, immediately upon the receipt of money subsidies from Germany, whereof the first had already arrived. Meanwhile troops from Mosul and Damascus were assembling to attack the Suez Canal and to invade Egypt. Important detachments of Bedouins had been armed, means of transport had been provided for them, and floating mines had been placed in the Gulf of Akaba, an arm of the Red Sea. Turkish envoys continued their efforts to induce Bulgaria and Rumania to co-operate with Germany and Austria-Hungary, but without immediate encouragement. Proposals of the same kind were made to Greece. There was increasing anarchy in Epirus, where the Albanian bands, incited by Austrian agents, molested the Christian population. Greece seized upon this pretext to take possession of the districts of Argyroskastron and Premiti.

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Suddenly, on the 29th of October, the cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau*, with the *Hamedieh*, of the Turkish navy, bombarded Odessa and two other Russian places, sank a Russian gunboat, and attacked a French steamship in the Black Sea. To the protests of the Russian, French, and British ambassadors the Turkish Government merely proposed the recalling of the cruisers within the Bosphorus and expressed a vapid desire to remain at peace with the Triple Entente.

**Declarations of war by France, Britain, and Russia.** There was an accent of cynical mockery in this response. Immediately the three ambassadors demanded their passports. The climax of deception, hypocrisy, and betrayal had now been reached. Between the 30th of October and the 6th of November, 1914, France, Britain, and Russia declared war against Turkey.

Enver Pasha, Minister of War, one of the principal promoters of the revolution of 1908, who had studied tactics and strategy at Berlin and believed himself destined to a Napoleonic career, was the accredited author of the Turkish policy of co-operation with Germany and Austria-Hungary. The seeming childishness of the manoeuvres of the Sultan's Government, pending the final step, were chiefly due to two things: the hope of inducing Greece, Bulgaria, and Rumania to form with Turkey a new Balkan League, to aid the Central Powers in the crushing of Serbia and her Allies,

which hope had not been wholly relinquished; and the division of counsels between the Young Turks and Old Turks as to the true interests of the Ottoman people, relative to the world-crisis.

The alliance of the crown of Saint Stephen with the Grand Turk was a total reversion of the policy which had been pursued for hundreds of years at Vienna and Budapest. Austria and Hungary, aided by Poland, had valiantly defended the Cross against the Crescent, dripping with the blood of thousands upon thousands of Christian victims, when all the rest of Europe had shuddered and shrunk in horror of the dread scourge of the Islamic hosts. In order to dominate the east and to pursue their dreams of wealth and grandeur, Austria and Hungary were now willing to give the lie to all of those heroic motives in their past history which in the opinion of the greater part of civilized mankind most redounded to their lasting honour.

**A "Holy War" proclaimed by the Sultan.** There were some apprehensions in France and Britain of the effect of the proclamation by the Sultan of the "jihad" or holy war against all non-Mahometan peoples except his Allies. But they proved to be needless. The Kalif of Constantinople was without religious or political influence in Morocco, in Algeria, or in Central and Western Africa. In Egypt, as in Arabia, the Moslem faithful acknowledged only the spiritual authority

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of the Kalif of Mecca. Between the Arab and the Turk was a profound abyss. In all other Islamic lands, the Kalifate of Constantinople had come to be less and less revered. Its hold on the seventy million followers of Mahomet in India was extremely fragile. Everywhere the claim of the Osmanlic Sultan to descent from the Prophet, the sole basis of his pretended spiritual authority, was regarded as of little genuine value.<sup>1</sup> Other kalifs could boast of the authentic blood, and in many communities it was only the companions of the Prophet, after himself, who were revered in prayer. The Moslem world lacked, therefore, the unity which two centuries before had made it so formidable and so terrible a military and social force.

**Remarkable success of Turkish duplicity.** The almost marvellous fact, most salient of all, in all this precedent diplomatic history is that Turkey had deceived the anti-German Powers as long as it had—even to the eleventh hour. The Ottoman Government, so far as its controlling members were concerned, had from the first been the willing accomplice of the Central Empires, and had

<sup>1</sup> Agar Khan who ruled over millions of Moslems in British India, said: "No true Islamic interest is threatened by the Great War. Turkey was the trustee of Islam: our holy cities are in her keeping. Now that she has shown herself a tool of Germany, she has ruined herself. She is no longer a trustee of Islam, and evil will overtake her."

merely awaited the most opportune moment for action. The stronger ministers of state tolerated the weaker ones in order that the responsibility of the final result might fall upon as many elements of the body politic as possible. It would be time enough later to get rid of those weaker members. Hence in the ministerial council itself there were disputes and temporizings, which as reflected in the acts of the government impressed the world at large as unaccountably inconsistent and erratic. The anti-German Powers treated Turkey as a foolish, over-indulged child, instead of what she notoriously was in her political composition: incurably corrupt, old in vice, perverted, cruel, faithless.

This lesson was not enough for them. Their diplomacy in regard to the Balkan states was just as inane, just as stupidly deaf and blind, as it had been in regard to Turkey. This was a fitting epilogue to the miserable failure of European policy, for more than half a century, relative to Macedonia and Crete. And so, for many months longer the Balkan riddle was unsolved. Each week found the diplomatic situation, as between the still peaceful Balkan states and the anti-German Powers, more uncertain, more complicated, more confused. The same machinations on the part of the Germans which had failed in Italy were at work in Greece, Rumania, and Bulgaria.

**Rumania's spirit of aloofness.** From the

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commencement of the war the citizens of Greece and Rumania were filled with a lively enthusiasm for the cause of Serbia and of the Triple Entente. At the period of the second Balkan struggle a defensive alliance had been formed by Serbia, Rumania, and Greece, and it still subsisted. Rumania's policy, however, was marked by a strong spirit of aloofness towards her neighbours. Her strongest hate was of Hungary.<sup>1</sup> But she was equally distrustful of Bulgaria. In the latter country the people, while unfriendly to Greece and Serbia, detested both Germany and Austria-Hungary, and were imbued with a profound admiration and affection for Russia, by whose efforts, together with those of Rumania, they had obtained their freedom in 1877-78.

But in Greece, Rumania, and Bulgaria, the monarchy, although outwardly constitutional, had taken in its general conduct a decidedly anti-democratic trend. The dynasties in all three of these countries were entirely foreign to the racial blood of the nations themselves. Alone of all the Balkan states, Serbia and Montenegro, which ethnically were almost one, had kings of indigenous stock. All the other monarchs had Germanic sympathies and leanings.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "There can be no question of any reconciliation with Hungary."—ROBERT BEAULIEU, a Rumanian (1915).

<sup>2</sup> Michelet, in his *History of the French Revolution*: "Monarchs, in whom the peoples seek the guardians of their nationality, are,

**The "Prussians of the East."** From certain writers the Bulgarians had received the sobriquet of the "Prussians of the East." There were signs that they were proud rather than resentful of it, although its appropriateness for many lay in the fact that the men by whom they were governed were addicted to falsehood, duplicity, and cruelty. In many points the ethnical development of the Bulgarians had resembled that of the modern Prussians, and their moral characteristics were much the same.<sup>1</sup> There was something very German in their utterly unscrupulous treatment of their neighbours and of the great mother-Power Russia. Several times already since the Russo-Turkish War of 1878, Bulgaria had given evidence of rank ingratitude towards her liberators, the

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in general, by their relationships and marriages, less national than European, having often their dearest connections, friendships, affections, in foreign countries. There are few kings who, in battle against a king, do not find themselves face to face with a cousin, a nephew, a brother-in-law. Ties of this sort, which oblige men to acknowledge their own partiality, are they not legitimate grounds of suspicion of the supreme justice of nations, which plead their contentions by diplomacy, or settle them by the sword?"

<sup>1</sup> "Les Bulgares sont des Slavs tartarisés ou des Tartares slavisés."—J. AULNEAU.

"How far may we distinguish the Bulgarians from the Serbs, and what is their exact origin? Some pretend that the Bulgars preceded the Greeks in the conquest of Hellas" (Thessaly). *La Péninsule Balkanique*, Paris (1899).



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Russians and Rumanians.<sup>1</sup> Of Russia she was the spoiled child; and she showed anything but a sisterly affection for Rumania. Whatever the real force of her grievance, her course in attacking her late Allies, after the first Balkan War, was both traitorous and recklessly headstrong.<sup>2</sup>

**Responsibility of the non-German Powers.** The Central Empires naturally encouraged and abetted her; but also a large degree of responsibility must fall to the non-German Powers, which exhibited the acme of combined obtuseness, suspicion, jealousy, and physical and moral cowardice in again providing a means of keeping alive the motives of discord in the Balkans, which for so many years had brooded as an incubus over the prosperity of the world.

<sup>1</sup> At the most critical moment of the War of 1878, it was Rumania's small, but fine army which gave Russia her final assurance of entire success. It is true that Rumania could only have refused her aid to Russia at great peril to herself, and that Russia exercised a pressure upon her which was virtually compulsion. It was doubtless for this reason that she received after the war far less consideration at the hands of her formidable ally than she might rightly have expected, while in the treaty of San-Stefano Bulgaria was favoured in a disproportionate degree.

<sup>2</sup> "Administered by Russia's avowed enemies and angered by the fatal blunders of her ruler, which she had been taught to lay to the charge of the Allied Powers, Bulgaria is naturally vindictive, untrustful, and grasping. Beneath the patriotic demands for all of Macedonia, Kavala, and the Dobroudja lurks the ambitious design of expanding the destiny and the frontiers of the nation and of building up the greater Bulgaria by means which involve the subjection and assimilation of other races and the creation of a Balkan Prussia."—DR. DILLON.

Germany had been glad to get a definite hold upon Bulgaria by sanctioning a loan to her by the German banks of five hundred million marks, the first half of which was to be placed in her hands before the 1st of August, 1914. Here was a seemingly sinister coincidence of date. Many warnings based upon the fact of this distinctly political loan were addressed to France and Russia, but were unheeded.

**Character of the Tsar Ferdinand.** Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Tsar of the Bulgarians, grandson of a king of France, was chiefly German in temperament and character, as he was in his original title and his paternal lineage. In statecraft he took Frederick II. ("the Great") as his model and Machiavelli as his master. Like Treitschke and Wilhelm II. he did not consider the sanctity of the pledged word beyond the mere duration of the circumstances which had given occasion to it.\* He broke the treaty which fol-

\* "The Coburg who reigns over the ancient Turkish province [Bulgaria], emancipated by Russia and freed from the yoke of the Osmanli by the actual enemies of Austria and Germany, has never obeyed anything but his own ambitions and hatreds. He always detested his neighbours of Greece and Serbia; he attacked them traitorously in 1913, and he has never consoled himself since then for having paid the price of his perfidy in conquests which he owed both to their arms and to his. He bears a mortal grudge against the nations which deemed it inequitable and intolerable that those whom, after profiting by their alliance, he had stabbed in the back, should themselves stand the forfeit of his crimes."—**STEPHEN PICEON (1915).**

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lowed the first Balkan War almost before the ink with which it was drawn had dried. Whilst turning a smiling face towards Russia and the Western Powers, he was already, prior to the Great War, hand in glove with the two Germanic Empires and the Young Turks. Nevertheless, Russia and the Western Powers still dealt with him as if these things could not be.

The Tsar Ferdinand was one of the most individual figures in Europe. He has been portrayed as a monarch who possessed the far-reaching ambitions of a Frederick II. of Prussia and of a Louis XI. of France, with all their mean, yet none of their larger traits. His mother was the Princess Marie-Clémentine of Orleans, daughter of Louis-Philippe, and noted for her excellent qualities. She reared the young Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha with exceeding care. His education, partly German, partly French, was both refined and manly. In his adolescent days he received from one of his literary intimates a sobriquet which long adhered to him, that of the "Prince Charming." After the freeing of Bulgaria, when a royal future was opened to him, it was lightly predicted that his career would be as glorious as that of his ancestor, Henri IV., to whom, in an exaggerated sense, he bore a certain facial resemblance. He might almost have been called, in fact, a caricature of the familiar type.

**Admiration of Louis XI., his ancestor.** Ferdinand

often betrayed his admiration of the eleventh Louis, whose name is a synonym of politic astuteness, timorous superstition, and cruel cunning; but he was fondest of counting the degrees of his descent from the Grand Monarque, Louis XIV. Yet he never forgot that fully one-half of his blood was purely Teutonic, and his actions were more reminiscent of the crafty and implacable Valois than of the "God-given" (*Dieu-donné*) grandson of the great Béarnais.

He was a dilettante in art and in all the pursuits of the intellect and taste that mark the life of the modern well-born. He was also a sportsman, a frequent traveller, and an apt student of politics and men.<sup>1</sup> He knew how to create for himself a reputation for elegance, for loyalty, generosity, and *bonhomie*, and always to impart an impression of a thorough devotion to the good of his people and the grander development of their patrimony.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He possessed great landed estates in Hungary. In all his diplomatic intercourse with the Dual Monarchy he never lost sight of this fact, of much personal moment to himself, but of scarcely any to his subjects.

<sup>2</sup> Even those who were nearest to Ferdinand of Bulgaria in princely kinship refused to accept him at his own measure. His uncle, the noble and patriotic Duke of Aumale, son of Louis-Philippe of France, was anything but fond of him and treated him, indeed, as rather an upstart. Meeting him one day, a short time after he had succeeded Alexander of Battenberg in the principality of Bulgaria, the Duke pretended to be greatly struck by a change in his appearance. "Oh, it's you, my boy!" he

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**Stamboulof, instrument of Ferdinand's cruelty.** Ferdinand was plausibly accused of a cunning as subtle, a cruelty as unscrupulous, in short a Machiavellism as supple as that of any monarch who has lived in modern times. His first prime minister, the famous or infamous Stamboulof, who had been left to him as an onerous, yet indispensable legacy, by Alexander of Battenberg, has been depicted as a sculless monster, the willing executor of the most criminal designs of his master.

According to a contemporary writer,

Stamboulof imprisoned everybody who was objectionable to the Prince, among whom, thrust pell-mell into abominable cells, were ex-ministers whose influence he feared, ex-officers of the army who had fought for the independence of Bulgaria, humble subordinates subjected to cowardly terrorism in order to force them to make serviceable revelations, and common-law felons, destined to give consistency to the system of false accusation. The judges who condemned the victims were the abject creatures of the Prime Minister, and hence of the sovereign. Thus were successively butchered Major Panitza and all the patriots dangerous to tyranny, who under the leadership of men like Stanciof and Balabamof had taken the initial steps in the liberation of their country.

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exclaimed. "I am like Europe; I don't recognize you." In fact, the principal European governments were slow in indicating their approval of the choice of the Bulgarian politicians, prompted by German and Austro-Hungarian intrigue.

Unlike James II. of England, Ferdinand did not openly exult over these "bloody assizes."

Whenever such iniquitous executions were to take place, he found it most convenient to set out for a tour of the courts of Europe, and he thus created what in the legal sense was an alibi, hoping that, when they became known, all the blame of these dreadful proceedings would fall upon his *âme damnée*, the furtive and execrable Stamboulof. At Vienna and Berlin Ferdinand was always especially well received,<sup>\*</sup> because of the hope of the two Germanic Powers that he would be induced one day to betray his own and his country's benefactor, Russia. And the rulers at London and Paris were his complaisant dupes.

**In fear of assassination.** Ferdinand was haunted by a fear of assassination. This was so much a mania with him that he once loudly accused a foreign minister plenipotentiary at a court reception, before a throng of dignitaries, of a plot to kill him. When at last Stamboulof was murdered by a patriot hand, in punishment for his innumerable misdeeds, the King had again managed to be absent from Bulgaria. It has been said, yet never proven, that he had some prior knowledge of the conspiracy. Stamboulof, whom he himself

<sup>\*</sup> Franz-Josef, however, is said to have frequently snubbed him, declining to treat him as a "royal cousin" until some years after he assumed the title of "Tsar."

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feared in a measure, had become too odious to be of further use to him.<sup>1</sup> The King was glad enough, besides, to have assurance that he himself would not be the first, or perhaps the second victim of the avengers. On his return, the Prince took the active direction of the affairs of state, and emphasized the policy of general conciliation towards foreign governments which led gradually to such a situation that he was able to proclaim himself Tsar and afterwards to annex Eastern Rumelia, without meeting with any dangerous opposition.

Such was the character which those who knew somewhat of the secret history of the kingdom of Bulgaria attributed to Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Certain French writers, after he had declared himself on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary in the Great War, delighted to bestow upon him the title of the "Mephisto of the Balkans."

**Political jugglery with religion.** This sketch is not, however, complete until there be added to it

<sup>1</sup> Stamboulouf had been largely instrumental in the choice of Ferdinand for the Bulgarian throne, and the latter is said to have hated him quite as much as he was beholden to him. It was Stamboulouf who originated the policy of ingratitude towards Russia. Some writers surnamed him "the Terrible" and also, because of his solitary habits, the "Monk of the Balkans." He travelled from city to city in Bulgaria with a guard of riflemen. He was virtually dictator, much more so than ever Richelieu was in France.

certain traits of religious duplicity not fully revealed until the King of the Bulgarians had determined to join himself to the enemies of Russia, and was confronted by the need of disarming, so far as was possible, the ecclesiastical prejudices and devout convictions of the greater part of his subjects. Himself a Roman Catholic, Ferdinand had caused his son Boris, heir-apparent to the throne, to be baptized in the Orthodox or Græco-Bulgarian faith. As Ferdinand himself acknowledged, the motive of this was purely political. He even professed profound grief at the necessity which dictated the act. Its object was accomplished, that of conciliating the great mass of the Bulgarians, who looked with aversion upon the Roman Catholic ritual, and of winning a return of sympathy for the court of Sofia from that of Saint Petersburg.<sup>1</sup> The head of the Bulgarian state was excommunicated by the church of Rome for his indirect apostasy and the ban was not lifted from him until Good Friday of 1914.

**Crown Prince Boris an apostate.** When Ferdinand was ready to declare himself an ally of the Germanic empires he was also ready to resort to another religious ruse. At his wish his son, long since at the age of manhood, declared himself an

<sup>1</sup> "When Russia took up arms in 1877 to free Bulgaria it was as much a religious crusade as it was a political action."



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adherent of the Uniate Catholic body,<sup>\*</sup> the members of which belonged primitively to the Greek Church, but afterwards attached themselves to that of Rome, acknowledging the supremacy of the Pope, while retaining their own ritual and many of their distinctive practices and observances.

The aim of the King of the Bulgarians in this latter step was obviously twofold: He desired to cultivate a sentiment of religious kinship between his people and the Austro-Hungarians, who for the most part are profoundly Roman Catholic in their faith; and he intended deliberately to open a gulf between the Orthodox Russians and the Bulgarians, whose religious traditions were substantially the same, but who, he believed, would follow in all docility the lead of their princes, and cast upon the former, notwithstanding that they had been in pious communion with them for ages, the hateful stigma of heterodoxy or even of heresy. The Uniate clergy differing from the Græco-Russian clergy in nothing practically except their spiritual allegiance to the Pope of Rome, the multitude were expected to accept the former without hesitancy, particularly as among them many would undoubtedly be found who had simply apostasized

<sup>\*</sup> The Uniates are most numerous in Galicia, and the seat of their bishop is at Lemberg. There are four million of them in the Austrian Empire. Ecclesiastically they are subordinate to the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda at Rome. Their priests continue to marry as in the early ages of the universal church.

in imitation of the Crown Prince and had still retained, therefore, their relative official and social status.

**Surprising faith in the Central Empires.** Ferdinand's trust in the Germanic emperors was rather surprising. None of the better-poised observers of Europe believed that the lavish promises of the latter could have any real value. They were sure, on the contrary, that they would be promptly violated on the very day when Germany should find herself to be no longer in need of Bulgarian support.

However feeble the intelligence of the sovereign who consents to become the instrument of Wilhelm II. [wrote a Bulgarian publicist], it is not possible that he can fail to recognize the inanity of the hopes held out to him. In reality, he leads his nation voluntarily to the abyss. Ferdinand is dominated by a double thought: to atone for his heterodoxical act, in causing his son to be baptized in the Russo-Greek faith, by favouring the defeat of the hosts of orthodoxy; and to revenge himself upon the Russians and Serbs, to whom he attributes without reason the failure of his pompous scheme of supremacy in the Balkans.<sup>\*</sup> German at heart and in all his inclinations, he had never the smallest sympathy for the people whom he governed. By the most senseless of decisions in 1913 he threw the nation into the most difficult of positions, and deprived it of the glory that the devotion of its sons and

<sup>\*</sup> 1912-13.

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the genius of Radko Dmitrief had earned for it. To-day he delivers it as a prey to the ambition of the Hapsburgs, and that Enver Pasha may drag it ignominiously in his train. There was an emperor in Byzantine history who merited the surname of the "Slayer of Bulgarians." Ferdinand of Coburg is more ambitious; the title to which he aspires is that of the "Murderer of Bulgaria."

If this judgment, in some of its terms, is possibly too absolute, it is still certain that Ferdinand gave for it abundant provocation.

**Secret pledge of the King of Greece to Wilhelm II.** The divergence of the public interest and of the dynastic interest in Greece was but slightly less marked than in Bulgaria. Constantine, the King, whose father had died not many months before by the hand of an assassin, maintained in practice, if not in theory, his prerogative in the choice of ministers as above that of the parliament. Sophia, his Queen, the sister of Wilhelm II., largely influenced her husband for Germany's profit against the popular will.<sup>1</sup>

In anticipation of the moment when the Gor-

<sup>1</sup> Bayle, precursor of Voltaire, in his famous historical dictionary said: "This fatality which more than any other has beset the French monarchy—it is the fact that its Queens almost always remain alien at heart and are ordinarily the instruments employed by God to humiliate and chasten the nation." This passage might be said to have been prophetic of the careers of Marie Antoinette and the Empress, Marie Louise; perhaps, also, of that of the Prussian wife of Constantine I. of Greece.

dian knot of the Balkan situation must be cut, Wilhelm II. had long had a secret personal understanding with his brother-in-law of Greece, binding the latter to refrain, whatever might be the ultimate development of the Great War, from attacking Germany. Had Greece not found in Venizelos, the liberator of Crete, an intrepid, forceful, and intensely patriotic leader, opposed to the ferocious principles which animated the aggressive war of the Central Empires, she might have permitted herself to be overawed by them, even as readily as had Bulgaria. The public opinion of Greece, if unhampered by the dynastic factions, would from the first have impelled the government to range itself by positive action on the side of the Triple Entente.<sup>1</sup>

Venizelos had proved himself, even before the outbreak of the war, the greatest Greek statesman of his time. To give a psychological account of the antagonism between himself and the King, one must go back to the period when the latter was governor of Crete, under the tutelage of the Great Powers,<sup>2</sup> and the former merely a modest protagonist of immediate and complete independence for the heroic and long-suffering island. The Crown Prince, under the provisional title of Lord

<sup>1</sup> Later, however, this public opinion was more or less modified by the course of events, and the fear of possible vengeance on the part of the Teutonic allies.

<sup>2</sup> 1898.

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Commissioner, displayed anything but that energy and boldness of character which were needful in the circumstances. It was in spite of his inert timidity that Venizelos forced the issue of complete separation from Turkey and hastened the moment of its consummation. Prince Constantine resigned the governorship; but Venizelos and his partisans opposed a stolid and unwavering moral resistance to coercive interference, even when inferentially menaced by certain of the Great Powers.

**Venizelos's great services and popularity.** The definitive annexation of Crete or Candia to the kingdom of Greece was due to Venizelos.<sup>1</sup> And from that time no other citizen had so strong a hold upon the hearts of his countrymen. He became the Prime Minister of Greece.<sup>2</sup> He had rendered to the dynasty as great a service as to the nation and he deserved the gratitude of King George and all the royal family. But there were those at Athens who whispered that this gratitude was too great a burden for the *Diodoque*, Constantine, to bear.

The Prince was then the least popular public

<sup>1</sup> The annexation was proclaimed by the citizens with Venizelos at their head in 1908, in defiance of the six Great Powers, who were the guarantors of the autonomy of the island. It became definitive in 1912, after Turkey's crushing defeats in the Balkan War.

<sup>2</sup> "Crete imposed her sons upon Greece as chiefs when the latter dared not admit her motherhood."—DR. DILLON.

personage in the realm. The army and the people had virtually driven him into exile. It was Venizelos who, in 1909, after giving to Greece by the exercise of his admirable genius a new and auspicious organization, caused the recall of Constantine and helped him to rehabilitate himself as a soldier and an officer. Thus the Prince's obligation to the statesman became more onerous. It was Venizelos, again, who was the dominant spirit in the difficult task of the formation of the Balkan League, thus rendering possible the discomfiture of Turkey in 1912.

**Origin of Constantine's dislike of him.** In the first Balkan War, Prince Constantine, as the nominal commander of the army, wished to pursue a strategy of his own.<sup>1</sup> Venizelos was even compelled to have recourse to the authority of the King to induce him to pay due deference to the decisions of the general military staff.

Constantine had an immeasurable admiration for the might and enterprise of Germany. This had even led him, when he was still the *Diodoque*, or Crown Prince, to praise and toast the German army as the best and most valiant in the world, in the very face of French officers, members of the mission of tactical instruction which had come to Greece by request of the King, who chanced

<sup>1</sup> "A man of elementary mind, he none the less possesses great self-confidence."—A writer in *The Nation*, London, 6th November, 1915.

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unfortunately, on this occasion, to be absent from the country. Venizelos, as Prime Minister, by the use of his moral and constitutional authority, compelled the man who was later to become his sovereign to make amends to France and her representatives in a speech and toast at a special banquet on the following day, given in honour of the French army. It would perhaps be too presumptuous to conclude that the Prince retained so profound a memory of this indiscretion and its forced reparation that never again could he look upon Venizelos without a certain degree of prejudice. It is certain, nevertheless, that a thoroughly cordial harmony between him and his foremost subject was ever thereafter non-existent. The prestige of Venizelos, which had gradually grown, eclipsed that of the Prince, in spite of the factitious glory which the latter had gained in the Balkan Wars. Even after he had become King, his impatience at the necessity of accepting Venizelos as his Premier was plainly manifest. He evidently regarded the minister's immense popularity as a derogation from his own legitimate authority. So far as he could, without openly setting constitutional restrictions at naught, Constantine tried to direct the foreign policy of the government himself. The firm will and the fearless temper of the Premier were proof, however, against the umbrage and arrogance of the monarch. This was demonstrated by a widely famed incident.

**The King disavowed by his Minister.** Constantine, while visiting the Kaiser at Potsdam, virtually repeated the offence of which he had been guilty as Crown Prince, by exalting in a toast above all other nations the German political prestige and the German military power, forgetting for the moment apparently the immense respect and gratitude which the people over whom he ruled owed to France, Britain, and Russia, the victors of Navarino, where the liberation of Greece was assured. This piece of undiplomatic folly bore a strong resemblance in motive and consequence to certain of the Kaiser's indiscretions. At Athens the King's toast was no sooner known than disavowed. The Prime Minister declared it to be in no sense representative of the true attitude or sentiment of the Greek Government.

This was the culminating point, prior to the Great War, of the silent struggle between the sovereign and the statesman. When the peace of Europe was finally ruptured, the Berlin court sought for means of employing the jealousy of Constantine to Germany's advantage. It was a question of finding Venizelos at fault and of proving the fact to the Greek nation.

The King's pledge to the German Emperor had been made without the direct knowledge of the leading Greek statesmen. Venizelos, independently of the King, sought to effect an understanding with the Powers of the Triple Entente, whereby



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the compensations and guarantees which Greece was to obtain, in consideration of her taking an active part in the war on their side, should be specifically fixed.

**Venizelos would have helped the Serbs.** Venizelos would at once have furnished an army to join in the land attack on the fortresses of the Dardanelles. A suggestion by France that Greece send an expedition to succour the Serbians, and, through their territory, invade Austria-Hungary, was well received, as accordant with its treaty of alliance of 1913. This proposal was qualified later, however, by conditions, which, while flattering the national ambition of Greece on the one hand, were on the other repugnant to the sentiment of racial patriotism which had caused her to fight in that year for the annexation of a part of Macedonia. In February, 1915, the non-German Allies offered to Greece large concessions in Asia Minor, including the city and region of Smyrna; but they expected her also, if Bulgaria should range herself on their side, to yield to the latter the rich district of Macedonia, chiefly inhabited by Bulgo-Slavs, which she had received after the Balkan wars.

The danger concealed in the equivocal attitude of the Bulgarian Government seems to have been more clearly appreciated by Venizelos than by any of the allied statesmen. A few weeks earlier, Greece, if governed by his will, would readily have cast her lot with the Triple Entente. This willing-

ness, however, was followed by hesitation. His first offer of such action had been evasively set aside. The Greek Prime Minister finally tendered the aid of a single army division and the fleet. But at this stage the King quickly placed a check upon Venizelos, and with the aid of German counsellors contrived his overthrow.

**Dramatic Council of the Crown.** The Council of the Crown at which this was effected had been proposed, in an excess of conscientiousness, by Venizelos himself. Indeed, as Prime Minister, influential as he was with the legislators, he could easily have induced the parliament to demand a declaration of war against Turkey. But he desired that such a declaration, when made, should be the act of the nation and not merely a partisan gesture. He asked the King therefore to assemble the former presidents of the Council of Ministers and to them unfolded his projects. So persuasive was his eloquence that Rhallys, the most inveterate of his political adversaries, rushed up to him, when he had finished, and pressed him in his arms, exclaiming: "You have spoken as a great Greek! I applaud you and I admire you!" All the others present, excepting the King, exhibited an equal enthusiasm. War against Turkey was about to be determined when suddenly Constantine bethought him to call upon General Dousmanis, chief of the army staff, for a statement as to the condition of the national forces. Dousmanis was a Germanophile, like Theotokis, the head of the

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political party to which he belonged. He did not confine himself to the question on which he had been summoned before the Council. He reported the army to be in excellent condition and equal to an immediate advance; but he also declared it was his certain belief that the Central Empires would be victorious, and that Greece, if she ranged herself against them, would inevitably be ruined. King Constantine immediately announced himself as of this opinion also. Thus it prevailed. Venizelos had been beaten by an unforeseen manoeuvre. So well, indeed, had this been prepared, with the full knowledge of the German intriguers, that Baron Schenk, the Kaiser's special representative at Athens, had said that very morning in a published interview: "I am sure that Greece will not abandon her neutrality, and that Venizelos will relinquish office."

**Warning and advice to the King.** Venizelos indeed relinquished office as Prime Minister; but before doing so he wrote to the King a private and confidential letter, warning him that he had taken the wrong route, entreating him to forego pro-German prejudices, reminding him that all the interests of Greece were on the side of the non-German Powers and announcing that, if he persisted in his chosen course, the people would in the end rise up against him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have followed very closely here a narrative published by Louis Conseil in the *Excelsior*, Paris, 9th November, 1915.

Wishing to relieve the King of all ground of jealousy and in order that he might be entirely free to profit by the advice thus given him, without appearing to be beholden for it to any one, Venizelos betook himself to Egypt. He informed his intimate friends that he had no thought of returning, unless the King should fail in his obvious duty. "In that case," he declared, "I shall fulfill my task without flinching. We shall save Greece at whatever cost!" But Constantine regarded this supreme voluntary sacrifice as his own decisive triumph. German intrigues for the shaping of his course were carried on with redoubled intensity. Jealousy of the pure fame, of the lofty disinterestedness of the self-exiled statesman was sedulously stimulated, not only in the King himself, but in the veteran leaders of parties, who at an earlier stage had succeeded chiefly in bringing confusion and misfortune upon the country. The pro-German press of Athens was used to the utmost to vitiate public opinion.

**Renewed offers to Venizelos's successor.** Britain, France, and Russia meanwhile renewed to Gounaris, Venizelos's successor, their offer of post-bellum territorial advantages in Asia Minor, if Greece would join them in combating the Germanic coalition. But the Athens Government, still inspired by German counsels, tried to invent other conditions which on their face would appear impracticable. It demanded a guarantee of terri-

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torial integrity, clearly meaning the denial to Bulgaria of the cession of the Macedonian district, including the port of Kavala, which she most ardently coveted. The insuring of this cession and of another on the part of Serbia were the sole probable means of inducing Bulgaria to take up arms against Germany and Austria-Hungary. German diplomacy, therefore, in thrusting a wedge between Greece and Bulgaria, also prevented their voluntary adhesion to the Triple Entente. Gounaris further suggested that the broad territory in Asia Minor which was to be appropriated by Greece at the close of the war, provided the non-German Allies were victorious, should be more precisely defined, and that that which she already occupied in Epirus and in Southern Albania should be formally confirmed to her, although this would certainly have awakened antagonism on the part of Italy. Here again the German influence could be detected. Whatever would have incensed Italy against Greece would obviously at that conjuncture have been to the advantage of the Central Empires.

**Greek attack upon Turkey proposed.** If these terms were granted and if, further, the Powers of the Triple Entente would supply Greece with munitions and other provisions for war, then the Prime Minister would offer the Greek forces without reserve for a concerted attack upon Turkey. The King's general staff were of the opinion that

the best method for such an attack would be to strike directly at Constantinople, the landing and advance to be made by way of Dedeagatch, the port on the Ægean which Bulgaria had acquired in 1913. But this, of course, would require either the consent and at least the passive co-operation of Bulgaria or action openly hostile to her.

The Greek proposition was especially embarrassing for the Allies because they had been in negotiation also with the Tsar Ferdinand's ministers to obtain the aid of Bulgaria upon promises of territorial aggrandizement, including the Bulgo-Slav district in Macedonia which Greece had annexed in 1913. Upon this the Athens Government informed the non-German Powers that Bulgaria already was in secret alliance with Germany and Turkey.<sup>1</sup> The diplomatists who were directing the foreign policies of Britain, France, and Russia, however, not only failed to detect the insincerity of the attitude of Greece, but also absolutely refused to summon Bulgaria at that time to declare herself unequivocally on the one side or the other.

**Basis of proposed Greco-Bulgar agreement.** The King, in Venizelos's absence, was personally not idle. In pursuance of the passive policy which

<sup>1</sup> "Was Bulgaria thus complaisant towards Turkey in order to prepare her revenge against the Serbs and Greeks and later to conquer Monastir, the cradle of her statesmen, and Kavala and Salonika, the richest ports of the coast?"—J. AULNEAU.

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was permitted her by his engagement with the Kaiser, he had recently made a new informal agreement<sup>1</sup> with the Bulgarian Government, defining the advantages and safeguards which Greece would command if she refrained from giving aid in the Balkans to the enemies of Germany. Its basis was the renunciation of all claim by Bulgaria to the district of Macedonia already possessed by Greece, the occupation of Monastir in Serbia and of territories in Southern and Middle Albania by the latter, and the guarantee of the integrity of Greek territory by Germany and Austria-Hungary. Bulgaria hoped for her part to acquire by conquest Middle and Western Serbia; all of the Macedonian district which Serbia had annexed, whereof the population was more Bulgarian than anything else; and a part of Albania, inclusive of the port of Durazzo. That this last ambition would have provoked the anger of Italy, as menacing her own projects in Albania and her supremacy in the Adriatic, did not seem to be reckoned as of very great account by the statesmen of Sofia. Bulgaria had been warned<sup>2</sup> that the Powers of the Triple Entente guaranteed Serbia against Bulgarian aggression; and at the same

<sup>1</sup> This agreement and the one supplementary to it remained informal because the King of Greece wished to be in a position to say that no treaty embodying such conditions existed. Such denial was actually made in November, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> In December, 1914.

time they had suggested that Bulgaria should annex Thrace and a part of Macedonia which they assumed that Greece was willing to yield for the sake of unity of action against Germany and Austria-Hungary.<sup>1</sup>

**Positive demand upon Bulgaria by the Allies.** In May, 1915, the Powers of the Triple Entente positively demanded of Bulgaria that she aid them in the war. They promised her the restoration of the territorial limits assigned to her in the Treaty of 1912, including Kavala. She showed no eagerness to accept this proposition, but she asked for more detailed and more explicit terms. On the other hand, Serbia declared herself as ready unreservedly to concede all that the Allies required of her as a means of bringing about renewed harmony and common action on the part of the Balkan monarchies.

**Shamefully selfish treatment of Serbia.** From the first the non-German Allies, instead of giving Serbia an earnest of their purpose to aid her in a direct manner, by sending a great army, as soon as it could be raised, to take part in a determined march upon Budapest and Vienna, had treated her more as if she were the *bouc émissaire* (or

<sup>1</sup> Greece could not reconcile herself to the prospect of losing Kavala. "Greece . . . refused to look beyond, even though a part of Asia Minor was offered her. Germany took advantage of the moment to guarantee to Greece her territorial integrity."—GUSTAVE FOUGÈRES, Director of the French School at Athens.



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scapegoat) for all the sins of the Balkan states, and must pay in fact a bitter penalty or expiation to allay the world-tempest, which their own feeble and indeterminate policy had provoked these many years. Serbia, while defending her own right, defended also the more selfish interests of three mighty Powers, each of which possessed more than ten times her wealth, her resources, her population. To their shame will it be known to future ages that they persistently exacted of her that she sacrifice certain portions of her hard-earned territory as bribes to her greedy neighbours, in order to induce them to do what they themselves should have been ready in all willingness to do, that which wisdom dictated, that which honour and self-respect should have prompted them to do.

Until, from trustworthy sources, reports had begun to reach them of a negotiation between Turkey and Bulgaria, suspicion that the latter was grossly deceiving the Allies did not enter the minds of the diplomatists of London, Paris, and Petrograd—although it did that of Venizelos. The object of Bulgaria was to gain a strip of territory to the west and south of Adrianople, in the valley of Maritza, extending to the Ægean Sea, and thus to complete her possession of the Dedeagatch railway and to afford strategic protection for it. It also appeared that Germany, to overcome the latest hesitancy of Bulgaria, had pro-

mised her the seaport cities of Salonika and Kavala as well as Seres, the capital of the ancient empire of Stephen Ducham, dear on this account to all patriotic Serbs.

**Reported promise of Constantinople to Bulgaria.**

The bases of the secret treaty between Bulgaria and Turkey and of one between Bulgaria and Germany had been laid in July at Sofia, under the personal supervision of that past-master of semi-brutal diplomacy, Prince Buelow. A Turkish publicist,<sup>1</sup> resident in Paris when these treaties became known, accused the Committee of Union and Progress of having sold Constantinople to Bulgaria as the price of her participation in the war, at the same time that Egypt, North Africa, the Russian Caucasus and Transcaucasus, and the lost islands of the Levant, in order to offset this incredible sacrifice, were promised to Turkey by Germany, who as yet had no power over them.<sup>2</sup> Bulgaria placed virtually the whole of her military

<sup>1</sup> Cheric Pasha, editor of a Turkish periodical. His assassination was attempted in 1913 by one of his countrymen, a sympathizer with the Young Turks.

<sup>2</sup> There would have been neither historical nor ethnical warrant for assigning Constantinople to Bulgaria, in a partition of the Ottoman Empire. It was more Latin than Slavic, and more Greek than Latin. If Germany permitted Bulgaria to have Constantinople, it would have been merely as a stepping-stone to her own possession of it. Rumania had a better ethnical claim to the ancient capital of the Eastern Empire than any Slavic state, and Greece a better ethnical and historical claim than Rumania.

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resources at the disposition of Germany, while the latter, together with Austria-Hungary, was to push forward an army of 300,000 men, across the Save and the Danube, to be followed by a second army of equal strength, in the event of Rumania giving active aid to Serbia. The Central Empires guaranteed to Bulgaria that Greece would undertake nothing against her, but would content herself with an armed neutrality. The Bulgarian Premier, Radoslavof, boasted openly of this stipulation. The question of the exact nature of the Grecian neutrality, whether it was to be "benevolent" or not, relative to the non-German Allies, was later to assume a critical importance.

**Russia sends an ultimatum to Bulgaria.** Tsar Ferdinand already spoke exultantly of Bulgaria as destined to become, in a short time, the "seventh Great Power" of Europe. Meanwhile Bulgaria's prompt response to the joint summons of the anti-German governments was the placing of her entire army on a war footing.<sup>1</sup> Russia addressed an ultimatum to her on the 4th of October, 1915, in which was a reproachful reference to "the imperishable memory" of her liberation from the Turkish rule. The Sofia Government had been fully warned that any overt act against Serbia would be considered by Russia, France, and Britain as hostile to themselves. Bulgaria was required within twenty-four hours to break openly with

<sup>1</sup> September, 1915.

the enemies of the Slav cause and of Russia, and to proceed at once to expel from her territory all military officers of states at war with the Powers of the Triple Entente. The alternative was a declaration of war on the part of Russia. Bulgaria had already massed her troops along the eastern frontier of Serbia, and for weeks Austro-German forces had threatened a renewed invasion from the north. On the 14th of October the state of war between Bulgaria and Serbia was formally recognized, and Britain and France had also declared war on the former. Italy followed their example on the 18th.

In what situation were Greece and Rumania at this moment, in view of the new development of events?

**Venizelos recalled to power.** To unbiased understandings the adherence of Bulgaria to the enemies of Russia and the Western Powers had for months been fully foreshadowed. Public opinion in Greece had demanded that the opportunity for national expansion offered her by the war should not be lost or foregone. The position of the Greeks in this respect was in a large degree similar to that of the Italians. Greece in past ages had peopled all the shores and all the islands of the Levant. Constantinople, as well as Epirus, Macedonia, and Thrace had been Greek. Alexander's imperial fortune had left something of its hasty impress upon all the neighbouring lands. It was natural

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that the imaginations of the poets, the orators, the publicists of a nation in whose remote history there were a Salamis and a Marathon, should be fired by the exasperating vision of a Greece yet to be redeemed, of enslaved provinces which must by heroic will and effort be made an integral part of the motherland, which by unselfish valour had been freed nearly a century before from the consuming blight of the Islamic tyranny.

The King, in spite of his selfish personal policy, found himself obliged to recognize, at least outwardly, the growing passion of the people. After the change of ministry, new elections had been held in June. They had given to the liberal nationalists an enlarged majority, although every kind of official and unofficial effort had been made to prevent it. German gold had been freely used among the electors. Venizelos, in obedience to the enthusiastic mandate of the people, was recalled to power. Four months later came the full revelation of Bulgaria's attitude.

**King and Premier again differ diametrically.** The question of the validity of the obligation of Greece to Serbia, as her defensive ally, was now uppermost. Venizelos proposed to fulfil this pledge promptly and unstintedly, disdaining the narrow quibbles which the opposite factions, in sympathy with the King, at once set up. It was now pretended that Greece was bound to aid Serbia only if she were attacked by a single Balkanic

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Power, not by two or more, who were in alliance with greater extraneous powers. Again the King vetoed the policy of Venizelos. He admitted the right of the Western Allies, under the Treaty of 1913, which guaranteed to Serbia access to the sea by Salonika, to land forces there and to advance them to her relief across Greek soil; but he refused to admit that Greece should array herself in arms against Germany.

A second time, therefore, Venizelos withdrew, because, with the strenuous sentiment of the people behind him, he still differed diametrically with his sovereign.

How long the King could continue to adhere to his personal understanding with the Kaiser without endangering himself and his crown was thenceforth a critical problem. One thing seemed very probable. Constantine could not become the active accomplice of the Central Powers without exposing the country to ruinous naval attack, unless indeed the people by dethroning him should prevent it. Such an outcome would not have been altogether surprising. His father, King George, had narrowly escaped deposition or its equivalent, compulsory abdication. The saving consideration in King Constantine's case was that, during the Balkan Wars, he had won genuine popularity by his reputed gallantry and his enterprise as a leader, when, as a matter of fact, the military successes of which he reaped the credit were chiefly planned

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by the general staff and were, besides comparatively facile.

**Secret Greco-Bulgarian understanding.** The King, indeed, in pursuance of his desire to favour his imperial brother-in-law, assumed, at the most doubtful stage of the complicated negotiations between the Balkan states and the two great groups of belligerents, a great personal risk by accepting the protocol of a proposed secret supplementary agreement with Bulgaria, wherein it was set forth a declaration of the Greek Government to the effect that it considered itself released by the course of events from the obligations of its treaty with Serbia, and "resumed its liberty of action, for the safeguarding of its interests and the pursuit of its aspirations." It pledged itself to maintain an absolute neutrality towards Bulgaria, Turkey, and the Central Empires, and to assume towards the expeditionary forces which Britain and France were sending to Salonika "the attitude of an unwilling host towards a guest who is unwelcome, but whom he nevertheless can not drive from his door."<sup>1</sup> Greece was to refuse to those forces all aid which could be construed as friendly. Bulgaria, for her part, pledged herself to withdraw her troops from the Greek frontier

<sup>1</sup> The Greek Government denied subsequently that any "treaty" to this effect existed. It was probably an informal understanding, perhaps established merely by an exchange of so-called "verbal" notes.

and to avoid everything which might impede the placing of the Greek army on a war footing.<sup>1</sup> She renounced all claim to Kavala and to all other points on the Greek coast; and she promised, if circumstances permitted, to aid Greece by military co-operation in the realization of her ambitions in Albania. The right was accorded to Greece to obtain from Bulgaria all the supplies of food and other merchandise which she might need, this last clause being intended to meet the possibility of a blockade of Greece by the Western Powers.

Once more the issue between Constantine and his most popular subject had been joined, and was extremely acute. It was now a question how long the King could rule with a ministry truly representative of a minority only of the legislators. The following declaration was attributed to Venizelos and was never denied: "If I return to power, I shall make war upon Bulgaria. On Greece rests the moral obligation to prevent Bulgaria from gaining a preponderance in the Peninsula."

**Germanic influences in Rumania.** Within the royal circle of Rumania, also, there were powerful Germanic influences. The old King, who had

<sup>1</sup> The Greek "mobilization" being ostensibly intended solely for the defence of her neutrality, which might ultimately develop, if the King's policy were logically pursued, into a defence of her soil against invasion or occupation by the forces of the Western Allies.



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died in the early months of the war,<sup>1</sup> was, like Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, of Germanic blood. He had employed all the strength of his very wilful nature to repress the anti-German and anti-Magyar propensities of his people. The belief that Germany was invincible governed both him and his Queen, the famous Elizabeth, Princess of Wied, whose literary pseudonym of "Carmen Sylva" was held in admiring affection by many lovers of verse. The Queen, however, had always professed a strong sentimental and æsthetic attachment to France.

Rumania, in a general sense, despite the latinity of her origin, was a natural adherent of the Triple Alliance.<sup>2</sup> This was due chiefly to her geographical position. Her dependence on the Danube, the Black Sea, and the Dardanelles for her external commerce, together with her contiguity on three sides and a part of the fourth to Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Serbia, rendered her political situation at the outbreak of the Great War peculiarly complex and delicate. But economic and strategic considerations did not prevent Rumanian statesmen from recognizing the immense danger to which all the small states in south-western

<sup>1</sup> King Carol died in November, 1914. He was succeeded by his son Ferdinand.

<sup>2</sup> King Carol signed a pact with Austria-Hungary and Germany in 1884. Its last renewal before the Great War was in 1913. In 1884 Bismarck had sent a confidential agent to Constantinople to induce Abd-ul-Hamid to arm against Rumania.

Europe would be exposed if Germany and Austria-Hungary should completely overcome the Powers of the Triple Entente.

**Tendency towards absolutism.** The people of Rumania are not noted for individual initiative in politics, nor for independent habits of thought. It had been said of them that they followed their leaders as sheep do their shepherd. One of the best-informed contemporary writers on Rumania used a strikingly different figure of speech.

Rumania [he remarks] constitutes an ethnic island, surrounded by foreign<sup>1</sup> and not always friendly peoples. The benighted masses, listless and inert, are hypnotized and mummified, rather than led.<sup>2</sup> For a whole generation the foreign business of Rumania was transacted by the late King, without check or control.<sup>3</sup> At his death, this unconstitutional, but unquestioned, prerogative passed to the privileged classes, who already had in their hands the internal governance of the realm.

The distinct tendency of the monarchy, both in Rumania and Bulgaria, was towards autocracy.

<sup>1</sup> Distinct.

<sup>2</sup> This judgment by Dr. Dillon is, perhaps, too absolute; but it is nevertheless true in a very large measure.

<sup>3</sup> To the last King Carol was influenced by family considerations, by old friendships, and by personal obligations in determining affairs of state; and he employed all the means in his power to check the movement of the nation towards the rivals of the Germanic empires. On this subject there existed wide differences of opinion in the royal council.

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There was more than an historical significance in the choice by Ferdinand, when he declared the independence of his kingdom, of the title of "Tsar of the Bulgars," borne by Simeon the Great, of the first great dynastic line, in the Dark Ages. It reflected his intimate personal ambition, the dream of one day sitting on the throne of the Emperor of the East.

**King Carol's pro-German policy.** The branch of the Hohenzollerns who held the Rumanian throne,<sup>\*</sup> if less crafty in disposition than the Saxe-Coburg-Gothas, were even more openly inclined to swell the authority of the crown at the expense of the commonalty. King Carol had done much for his people, and up to a certain point he commanded their entire trust. He sincerely believed that Rumania ought to join with Germany and Austria-Hungary in their aggressive war. He wished to translate his conviction into action, but here he discovered suddenly that he had overstepped the privilege of his popularity, and just prior to his death he suffered a grave defeat in

<sup>\*</sup> Thanks to the nomination of Prince Charles Antoine of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen by Napoleon III., in 1866, after the hospodar, Alexander Couza, whom the latter had also been chiefly instrumental in raising to the throne of Rumania, had been forced to abdicate. "Thus a Prussian dynasty was installed in Rumania, with the heedless complicity of a French sovereign." —J. AULNEAU. Prince Charles Antoine of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (Carol I. of Rumania) was a descendent of Caroline, sister of Napoleon I., by Murat, King of Naples.

his efforts to bind Rumania to the fate of the Central Empires. His pronouncement in that sense did not find any echo in the nation. All of his ministers were in favour of neutrality, as a temporizing policy, at least, hoping that the hour would come ere long when Rumania, sword in hand, might conquer what was hers of right. This could have been true, but only in the sense of her ranging herself immediately and openly beside the Powers of the Triple Entente against the champions of lawless force.

**Clash between King and statesmen.** All of the more patriotic statesmen of Rumania were opposed to the King on the question of subserviency to the Triple Alliance. At a council of the Crown held by King Carol soon after the outbreak of the war, protest against the government's attitude was made by certain party leaders. To Janesco, ex-minister and ardent patriot, who boldly condemned the King's pro-German policy, the latter haughtily responded: "My signature is given. I am a Hohenzollern!" "Sire," answered the statesman, "I recognize here only the King of Rumania." Nicolas Filipesco, another patriotic ex-minister, on quitting the council before it ended, could not refrain from exclaiming: "Yes, I have seen the King, but I have not seen his Majesty!" It was at this audience that the old monarch gained his first real knowledge of the depth of the popular aversion to the grasping

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ambition of that other Hohenzollern, his distant cousin, the German Kaiser. Rumania's commitment to the Triple Alliance had kept her apart from the Balkan League in 1912. "Otherwise," in the opinion of Albert Prahoven, a Rumanian writer, "the question of Constantinople would have been solved then and there."<sup>1</sup>

**Character of John Bratiano, Premier.** In 1914 and 1915, John Bratiano was the Prime Minister of Rumania. In superficial aspect Bratiano's destiny was not unlike that of the younger Pitt in England. Son of Rumania's greatest statesman, the vigorous, dextrous, patient pilot of the royal ship of state when it was newly launched on the political waters, he had inherited rather than earned the leadership of the strongest political party, that of the liberals; and he became an idol even before the opportunity was his to prove that he merited the honours of a hero. But Bratiano was neither a Chatham nor a Pitt. He was indolent. He was without initiative in the interpretation of his country's wishes or of her most urgent wants. The literal and too willing servant of his party, he appeared to be without solid aims of national statesmanship or progressive government. In the series of negotiations between Rumania and the two groups of belligerent Powers and between Rumania and the other Balkan States, regarding territorial and other material rearrange-

<sup>1</sup> *La Roumanie en Armes*, Paris, 1915.

ments, proposed as conditions of participation in the war, it was truly said that he "set the national problem on the lowest possible plane."<sup>1</sup> His party as a whole desired intervention in behalf of Serbia and the Triple Entente, and the conservative party was ready also to support such a step. There was a third party, led by Marghiloman, which distinctly reflected the interests and views of the Berlin Government; but it lacked prestige and its pro-German efforts would have been negligible but for the countenance given it by King Carol and his successor, Ferdinand, and the aid of German agents and German gold. The higher military authorities favoured delay in the declaration of a definitive course, for the reason that the country was unprepared. The war had come too suddenly. As in Italy, the first thought of the chiefs of the army was to gain time.<sup>2</sup> One enormous difficulty was the lack of munitions. The important cannon of the Rumanian army were of German fabrication, and in the early stage of the war ammunition suited to them could only be gotten from that source.<sup>3</sup> Under every possible pretext, the delivery of munitions

<sup>1</sup> Guglielmo Ferrero.

<sup>2</sup> Later (October, 1915) two thirds of the Rumanian generals were in favour of going to war in aid of Serbia.

<sup>3</sup> "The Rumanian Government, partly through dishonesty and partly through negligence, was without sufficient munitions."—NICOLAS FILIPESCO.

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purchased in Germany by Rumania was retarded or evaded.

**Excessive demands by Rumania.** Rumania was naturally undisposed to confess her plight to either set of belligerents. Largely for this reason, her negotiations with France, Britain, and Russia were prolix and uncertain. Her demands for reward for the sacrifices which they expected of her were, besides, excessive. The representatives of the non-German allies were very much taken aback when they learned that she asked not only for Transylvania and the Bukovina (in the south-eastern corner of Galicia), but also the banat<sup>1</sup> of Temesvar, in the south of Hungary, bordering on Serbia, and Bessarabia, the extreme south-western province of Russia. Transylvania being divided from Rumania by an abrupt mountain chain,<sup>2</sup> its economic interests had tended rather to cement its relations with the centres of commercial activity in Hungary. At the moment when Rumania's demands were first formulated, it seemed singularly absurd that Russia, whose forces were in the midst of brilliant victories in Galicia, could be brought to consider the recession of Bessarabia, notwithstanding that a large proportion of its inhabitants, as in Transylvania, spoke the Rumanian tongue. At the Berlin Congress, Russia, against the will of Rumania, had obtained Bessarabia in forced exchange for a

<sup>1</sup> District.

<sup>2</sup> The Transylvanian Alps.

part of the Dobroudja,<sup>1</sup> simply because she considered it her right to share in the international control of the lower Danube and its mouths. This reason had lost none of its real importance. It would have been rashly anticipative, indeed, to say that something that Russia might elsewhere gain would compensate her for the loss of this province; yet at the same time there was the clearest possible logic behind the demand of Rumania. It was nevertheless confronted by the obstinate will of a Power which, in the whole course of its history, chiefly notable for the steady acquisition of alien territory, had rarely been known to relinquish the smallest tittle of it.

**She prepares to defend her neutrality.** Rumania's attitude, in negotiation with Russia, from October, 1914, to April, 1915, was strangely reserved and arrogant; but in the meantime she was diligently pushing forward her military preparations, on the strength, partly, of Russian intimations of territory to be gained, and partly because of a wise purpose to defend her neutrality, if need were, against all comers. Russia had now met with severe reverses in Galicia and was showing a new tendency towards compromise. It was understood that she was disposed to concede Transylvania, the Bukovina, and a zone of the

<sup>1</sup> The narrow district between the Danube and the Black Sea, immediately south of Bessarabia.



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banat of Temesvar,<sup>1</sup> extending as far as the river Tisza. The rest of the banat was to belong to Serbia, because of its strategic relation to her capital. There is reason to believe that Rumania would not now have insisted upon the cession of Bessarabia, if a large military movement in aid of Serbia by France, Britain, and Russia had afforded her the visible assurance that she could ultimately take and hold Transylvania. But Rumania had other demands. She insisted upon the freedom of the Dardanelles and the Danube. These questions could only have been settled at a general congress of the victorious Powers. The putting of them forward at so inopportune a moment therefore was regarded as patent evidence of her desire to retard the negotiations as much as possible, while awaiting further indications of the ultimate fortune of the war.

**Russia's claim to Constantinople.** The governments of France and Britain did not feel justified in urging Russia too strenuously to relinquish Bessarabia. They could not be blind to the logical sequence, that the larger the sacrifices which were demanded of the great northern Power the larger the compensation which she would insist upon

<sup>1</sup> "We want Transylvania and the banat of Temesvar. These are our fundamental demands and all the thoughts of our leading minds are directed to that end."—ROBERT BEAULIEU, a Rumanian writer. The Serbian element of the population of the banat was 32 per centum, the German 27, and the Rumanian only 3.

obtaining when it should finally come to the casting up of accounts. Russia clearly expected to gain Constantinople, as the meet reward of her pains, the crowning of her long dream of national advancement and of racial enfranchisement. It was firmly asserted by persons in the confidence of the higher political authorities in France<sup>1</sup> that both that country and Britain had acquiesced in this requirement, provided that the conquest of Constantinople proved a necessary step to a general victory over the Germanic coalition.

But what might Russia exact, beyond that, if Bessarabia were given to Rumania?

The question of the control of the Straits still haunted the minds of all diplomatists, as it had for many decades; now more urgently, however, for it was well foreseen that in the next European congress it must, if possible, be settled in a lasting fashion; and also that, if this were not possible, the making of an enduring peace would, perhaps, need to be indefinitely postponed. What if a new war among the non-German allies should spring out of the present war, a fruit of their conflicting pretensions as to rewards and compensations? It was not to be disguised that this thought, like a monstrous spectre, deeply enshadowed the councils of the nations.

**Difficulties of post-bellum readjustments.** Ger-

<sup>1</sup> Two of them were former Ministers of France, in conversation with the author.

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many could exult in the plausible anticipation that, even if her enemies should win, the guerdon of their efforts, after all, might prove to be but Dead Sea apples; yet even Germany could not fail to see that a world still torn by conflict, after her own definitive abasement, would be far less propitious to her revival and rehabilitation than a world at peace; for the simple reason that she could not hope to rise again except by the renewal of her material weal, which would be dependent as much on the trading and consuming capacity of her neighbours as on her own productiveness.

From whatever point it might be viewed, the possible inability of the non-German allies, if victorious, fairly to content one another in the territorial readjustments which must be made would be a dreadful menace to the whole of mankind, already sickened even to the verge of despair as it was by the horror of the great blood-letting and of a material destruction exceeding in wanton folly the direst pictures that imagination, either sane or insane, had ever formed.

Serbia's claim to the banat of Temesvar was more reasonable than that of Rumania, since the strategic command of Belgrad was involved. It was deemed, therefore, by the statesmen of the Triple Entente that Rumania ought to regard the great domain of the ancient principality of Transylvania as ample payment for such efforts in the common cause as they expected her to make.

**Rumania's neglected opportunity.** The Rumanian King and his chief minister were of a different mind; and the longer the war dragged on, and the more fluctuating its fortune on the Russian front, the more their recalcitrance was stimulated by the alternate threats and promises of German emissaries. If the war ended in the triumph of Germany and Austria-Hungary and if Rumania had aided them, even though it were only by the maintenance of a "benevolent neutrality" in their regard, permitting the passage of military supplies through her territory on the way to Bulgaria and Turkey, and refusing like accommodation to the opposing group of Powers, she was to have her reward. The alternative menace was her total elimination as an independent state, in the event of an Austro-German triumph.

The Rumanian Prime Minister seemed really to be striving, in the homely words of the adage, to "carry water on both shoulders." He desired to please the majority of the nation and the dynastic faction as well. In the spring of 1915 Rumania could easily have united all the Balkan States with herself in adhesion to the Triple Entente.<sup>\*</sup> Thus, with Italy, would have been completed

<sup>\*</sup> "The constitution of a Balkan federation would benefit Rumania very largely. It is an intellectual, moral, and economical necessity." These words are by Nicolas Filipesco, whom I have also closely followed in most of the statements of fact relating to Rumania's diplomatic attitude at this period.

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the most formidable coalition the world had ever seen.

**Bratiano as a diplomatic informer.** Bulgaria's trend in the opposite direction would have been arrested. Her people would have forced their government to imitate the action of Rumania. But Bratiano was without the courage and the energy at that time to follow implicitly his own intimate convictions and those of the liberal and conservative-liberal parties. He had the soul of the time-server and the courtier. The prestige of Germany's armament and the will of the young King overawed him. He had been fully advised of the making, in August, 1914, of a treaty between Bulgaria and Germany. Not content to be ambiguously silent, he informed the Bulgarian Government that its hands were free with reference to Serbia, since Rumania would not give her any aid. Bulgaria was thus encouraged to pursue her occult plan. Further, Bratiano communicated to Bulgaria the offers made by the Triple Entente to his own government and his refusal of them. It is difficult to reconcile this conduct with the accepted ideals of upright and self-respecting statesmanship. The Rumanian Premier thus betrayed all the diplomatic labour of the Triple Entente in the Balkans. It is equally difficult to understand how he could have failed to foresee in Bulgaria's success the ruin of Rumania. Not only would Rumania be overshadowed

by the aggrandizement of Bulgaria, but she would find herself entirely encompassed by malicious and overbearing neighbours, the Germanic Powers being masters in the Black Sea, and in possession, or at least dominant, in Bessarabia and Serbia.

**Rumania's agreement with the Triple Entente.** But gradually, owing to determined and incessant agitation by the opposition to the Bratiano ministry and the pressure of public opinion, the attitude of the Rumanian Government changed. The Powers of the Triple Entente made known to it the maximum of the concessions which Rumania could expect, and pledged themselves to those concessions in the event of eventual victory for their cause. Rumania promised to throw her whole army into the struggle on the side of the non-Germanic allies at the earliest favourable opportunity. An agreement embodying these stipulations was signed in June, 1915, by the representatives of Britain, France, Russia, and Rumania, and Serbia gave her formal assent to it.

The first cause of delay on the part of Rumania in the execution of this agreement was the necessity of the harvesting of her grain crop, which is the chief resource of the nation and of which immense quantities are exported annually. The Allies hoped for the early forcing of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, and Britain stood sorely in need of this same supply of wheat, barley, and rye. The Rumanian soldiers were wanted at

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their homes in the harvest, and therefore the Allies, for a time, looked with a kindly eye upon the delay. But meanwhile came the Russian disasters, and then the operations in the Gallipoli Peninsula miscarried, at least for a season. It was the period of the war, up to that moment, which impressed the inhabitants of the Balkan states most gloomily as to the prospects of the enemies of Germany and Austria-Hungary. It was quite natural, therefore, that Rumania, while she relaxed nothing of her military preparation, should have deemed that the best opportunity for her entrance into the war, since the making of the agreement with the Triple Entente, had not yet arrived.

**Ferdinand would fain have recanted.** The Austro-Germans took heart. The efforts of their diplomatists at Bukarest became more strenuous than ever. The King gave evidence of lack of firmness in the policy to which he was committed, and doubtless he would not have scrupled to renounce it, in spite of the given word, if a wholesome fear of the displeasure of his people and of the energy of the leaders of the chief party in opposition had not restrained him.

Thus Rumania's situation had become more and more embarrassed. The events immediately following Bulgaria's bellicose departure rendered it even critical. To one faction at Bukarest, action on Rumania's part was more urgent than ever; to another it appeared more dangerous, and

hence was to be avoided, or at least further deferred.

**Rumania's indifference to Serbia's fate.** The alliance between Rumania, on the one hand, and Serbia and Greece on the other, had always proved, since the second Balkan War, a virtual dead-letter. In the winter of 1914-15, Bratiano had done his best to dissuade the Greek Government from using its diplomatic influence at Sofia in favour of the non-German allies. Many months later, while the negotiation with the Triple Entente "still dragged its slow length along," Rumania's seeming indifference to Serbia's fate had undoubtedly an effect, temporary at least, upon Grecian policy. Rumania again declared that her engagement with Serbia did not bind her to the latter's defence in a war which was not originated by her immediate assailant, but in which the latter (Bulgaria) was acting as the ally of two nations so overwhelmingly powerful as Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Bukarest treaty,<sup>1</sup> it was further asserted, only obligated Rumania to aid Serbia in resisting aggression on the part of one of the signatory nations, that is to say, of Bulgaria or Greece or Montenegro, if unallied for offence or defence with a non-Balkan Power.

**Public rebuke to King Constantine.** A resounding discourse delivered by Venizelos in the early days of November pitilessly exposed the weakness,

<sup>1</sup> 1913.



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the indirection, and the illegality of the King's policy. Answering the question of an auditor, whether he believed that the King desired the ruin of the country: "Under a constitutional régime," he said, "the King can have no responsibility." Only politicians distinguished by their pettiness would seek to intrench themselves behind the Crown in order to head a partisan struggle. Under true parliamentary government, it was absurd to talk of the policy of the King, because it could not exist. All responsibility rested upon the ministers.

If you desire an absolute monarchy [exclaimed the orator], say so frankly and demand a change of governmental system. In that case we shall enter on a desperate struggle, for the people are resolved to preserve the present system. I admit the right of the Crown to differ with the ministry when it believes the ministry to be in disaccord with the nation; but after the recent elections no such disaccord can exist. I recognize that the King is an excellent strategist. In political experience, however, he is deficient.

These were words that might have characterized a Hampden, and they suggest inevitably a comparison between the fateful rebellion of Charles I. of England against the prescriptive rights of his people and the rôle of obstinate and perilous opposition to parliament and to constitution which Constantine I. seemed bent upon playing.

**Rumania and perhaps Bulgaria would have followed Greece.** In a supplementary speech Venizelos, replying to the late Prime Minister, Gounaris, then Minister of the Interior, said:

If in February last we had abandoned our neutrality in favour of the Triple Entente, it is highly probable that we should have been followed by Bulgaria and Rumania. In exchange for a small sacrifice destined to satisfy Bulgaria, Greece would have obtained vast compensations in Asia Minor and in the Guevgueli-Doiran region of Macedonia. Later, if we had aided Serbia against the combined onslaught of Bulgaria and the Central Powers, we should have gained as well the island of Cyprus, and the plain of Stroumitza. We would have driven Bulgaria back within her former boundaries. By your policy [addressing himself to the King's advisers] you have rendered the nation's hopes impossible, and in aiding the political ambitions of the Germanic group you have incurred involuntarily the risk of furthering the realization of Bulgaria's exaggerative dreams and the recrudescence of the Turkish power.

**Failure of the non-German diplomacy.** Disappointment and failure were thus far the sole fruit of the diplomacy of the non-German Powers in the Balkans. What had been written of this same diplomacy in its dealings with Germany in 1910 and 1911 would now have applied with equal force. The diplomatists were "Utopians who were fascinated by their own ideology"; without

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an assured sense of the realities; possessing none of the intellectual suppleness, at once clever and strong, which adjusts itself readily to facts, and is even the essence of true diplomacy. Instead of that, there were only fixed notions and fond illusions—"a system of inconsiderate optimism." The Germans, on the other hand, concerned themselves wholly with realities.

It would be extremely hard to find any valid excuse for the persistent slackness and apparent feebleness of purpose of the British Foreign Office and the obstinate and secretive clinging to illusions which characterized the attitude of Delcassé, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. Sir Edward Gray, on the 9th of November, in the House of Commons, made a confession that was most remarkable, in view of the deplorable results of the joint diplomacy in the Balkans of Britain, France, and Russia. The Germano-Austrian sympathies of the King of the Bulgarians, he said, had always been known to the British Government. Reports of Ferdinand's negotiations with Turkey, under German suggestion, had come to it from various sources as early as the previous April, or at the very moment when Serbia had been most perturbed by the raids of Bulgarian bands within her borders, unquestionably made with the connivance of that government, although stoutly disavowed by it.

**Greece refuses the island of Cyprus from**

**Britain.** Immediately after Bulgaria, anticipating the Austro-German advance from the north, had made in September her unannounced assault upon Serbia, Britain pressed strongly upon Greece the offer to cede to her the island of Cyprus, as a final and supreme inducement to her to join forces with the non-Germanic allies. Zaimis, defined as a "neutralist," had succeeded Gounaris as Prime Minister. He was regarded as a mere passive instrument in the hands of the King, and his administration fully justified this estimate. The ostensible purpose of Greece to stand aloof from the war was reaffirmed. The British offer, unparalleled perhaps in history, was categorically declined. Certainly the British nation never before had tendered so rich a prize to any Power. The refusal could not fail to inflict a pang of humiliation. It placed the London Government, in fact, in the light of its former prestige, in an almost pitiable position, which plainly invited the derisive jibes of its enemies. It would be hard to find in all its previous annals a moment when it had been so unmindful of its dignity and so clearly avowed by telltale acts its lack of proper foresight. It met this crisis stolidly, or with a characteristic parade of insensibility, while already, in France, Delcassé, the much-vaunted Foreign Minister, whom Germany especially hated, had resigned his place, a mute acknowledgment, whatever the reasons alleged, that his policy had gone wrong

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and that his diplomacy had been lacking in effective skill. A recasting of the French cabinet followed as an immediate consequence of the diplomatic fiasco in the Balkans. At the same time there were important changes in the British council of ministers, and, in Russia, the Tsar manifested his displeasure at the failure of the Balkan negotiations to such a degree that Sazonof was momentarily in danger of dismissal, and was finally retained in his place only after the appointment over his head of an imperial chancellor, the first in many years.

**Energetic action determined upon at last.** The governments of Britain and France sought to repair their diplomatic blunders in the Balkans so far as was possible, by making a tardy show of energetic action. Troops were to be sent by way of Salonika to the aid of the Serbians. Greece, as if in readiness for an unformulated emergency, had already massed the greater part of her army at Salonika. At London, Paris, and Petrograd disquieting queries arose as to her ultimate purpose. Was it hostile or friendly to the Allies? And was there reason to beware of treachery on her part? The allied governments seemed still to be amazingly ignorant of the real disposition of the King and the dynastic party at Athens. But their doubts were further intensified by a statement of the Finance Minister of Greece, soon echoed by the Premier himself, intimating that

the Serbians and possibly the British and French, if driven back from Serbia into Greece, might, in strict accordance with international law, be disarmed and interned. That Greece was strong enough to attempt this was hardly believed. Her government meanwhile professed the most cordial amity towards the members of the Quadruple Entente.

**Still another minority ministry.** The existence at Athens of a minority cabinet whose fate was subject to Venizelos's will was a paradox. In the cavalier behaviour of the Minister of War towards the representatives of the people was found an easy pretext for forcing the ministry to submit itself to a vote of the deputies. Zaimis, in face of the adverse result, resigned the premiership. The logical outcome of this crisis would have been the reinstatement of Venizelos as ministerial chief and the adoption of his policy of positive aid to the anti-German cause. The King and his confidential advisers, however, had no such intention. They contemplated, instead, the taking of an unconstitutional step, in the event of their inability otherwise to carry through their pro-German policy. Constantine was of a temper to make himself under certain circumstances military dictator.<sup>1</sup> Venizelos was not the man to deviate from the

<sup>1</sup> "Constantine has a will of his own. A man of elementary mind, he none the less possesses great self-confidence."—Writer in *The Nation*, London, 6th November, 1915.

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line of conduct marked out for him by his convictions and the King was resolved that he should be kept in the background. As an immediate expedient, an aged politician, named Skouloudis, who had been a useful partisan of Cretan liberty, was made Prime Minister, the rest of the cabinet being left almost wholly as it had been under the presidency of Zaimis. In the Chamber the majority remained in favour of Venizelos. A new vote of a lack of confidence in the ministry could probably have been provoked by him at will.

**Parliament illegally dissolved.** A week after the fall of Zaimis, the King, after some seeming hesitation, signed a decree dissolving the parliament and announcing the date of the new elections as the 19th of December. This action was contrary to the spirit of the constitution. Already there had been a dissolution of parliament within the year and the present political complexion of the Chamber of Deputies still closely reflected the will of the people. In the new elections, the greater part of the army could not have voted, unless, indeed, its organization on a war footing were to be dissolved for a time, to permit the rank and file to regain their homes. Venizelos drew attention very pointedly to the fact that virtually all of his political supporters were under arms, and that those who were not were chiefly the older and the more timid. If the majority of the soldiers could not vote the elections would manifestly be unfair

and thus they might furnish the King with a parliamentary body which, while conforming to his will, would certainly belie the will of the nation.

**Shortcomings of the Triple Entente diplomacy.**

No great political leader had yet appeared in any of the nations that were allied against the Central Powers, capable of impressing a vigorous unity of direction upon them all. From this lack their diplomacy had especially suffered. In a war of coalition it should at least have marched abreast of the great military developments, if not in some instances anticipating them. Not only did it lag behind the armies, entirely failing to grasp the premonitory signals which abounded, but it showed itself utterly unequal to the task of profiting by the delays in the combining of the adverse forces which by their splendid courage and fortitude the allied armies procured for it. "It lacked quick discernment; it lacked initiative; it lacked ideas; even on the defensive its enterprises were mostly inconsequent and devoid of clarity." Thus wrote Gabriel Hanotaux, adding:

What has it done and what has it obtained from the neutrals, in Spain, in the United States of America, in Sweden, in Holland? All the more emphatically was its passivity taken by surprise, while mistaking the real disposition of the Turks, of the Bulgarians, the effective purposes of the Greeks and the Rumanians; while twice it allowed Venizelos to fall, after he had been called to power by the Greek nation; when



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unable to join action more closely with Italy, or even with Japan; when everywhere what should have been its active propaganda has been non-existent or else inefficacious; when it could turn to no useful account either the good will or the devotion which responded throughout the world to France's appeal. So sorry a sterility, so painful a harvest of failures cannot be attributed simply to the difficulties of the task or to the caprices of destiny.<sup>1</sup>

**Change of methods is strenuously demanded.** The just strictures of the British press upon the diplomacy of the Triple Entente were no less severe than those published in France. It was complained in both countries that the public had been needlessly debarred from critically following the general activities of the diplomatists. It was held by some of the sounder writers that, had it been otherwise, the blunders and negligences which had been repeatedly committed might have been impossible. The censure of the press had been carried to so mean and absurd an excess that both the French and the British nation were exasperated by it. The untoward events in the Balkans were said on both sides of the English Channel to mark "the bankruptcy of secret diplomacy." The danger that threatened Serbia had long been foreseen; but publication of the fact was persistently prevented by the British Government. Attention had been called to it, too, by

<sup>1</sup> In *Le Figaro*, 27th October, 1915.

three of the important standing committees of the French parliament, that of foreign affairs, that of the army, and that of the navy.

Serious reforms are needed in the Foreign Ministry [said the *Journal des Débats*]. Methods of the dark closet and practices of the Louis XV. period must be abolished. In a democratic country like France, secret diplomacy has no proper place. The country is unwilling to be surreptitiously impelled in a direction which is unknown to it. It objects to being suddenly confronted with the fact accomplished. It condemns the inclusion of a hidden sense in international agreements whereof only the acceptable portions are shown to it. It wants to know whither it is led. It will not sanction occult engagements that are contrary to the national honour. For fourteen months there has been too great a misuse of the pretended necessity of keeping silence with regard to pending negotiations and of sparing certain privileged susceptibilities.

**Wrong estimate of the Balkan peoples.** The non-German Powers began their diplomatic efforts in the Balkans for the gaining of new allies as they had begun their military efforts against the tide of oncoming Teutons in the north of France and in Belgium. They underestimated the force of the enemy, his determination, and his freedom from any scruple of honour or of self-respect; and they continued to underestimate these things until the rudest kind of experience compelled them

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to a more intelligent use of their senses and their reason.

It required fourteen months of diplomatic gropings and blunders and rebuffs to convince them of the transcendent military and political prestige of the Austro-Germans in the Near East. They did not even remotely understand the psychology of the Balkan peoples, else this could not have been. Beyond the simple love of country, which may well be likened in those lands to the sheep's love of its native wold, or the ox's affection for his well-turfed pasture, the Balkan peoples had very little sentiment and less idealism. All of them were still, in the large sense, more Oriental than European. And like all the races of the Orient, their imaginations were most susceptible to practical impressions, of which the greatest of all was fear, the respect of force, which with them was the god of fear.

**Venal valuations of alliances.** For long years Germany had untiringly cultivated in those peoples the idea of her invincibility. And in the first year of the Great War she had added to this a living dread of her cruel and implacable will. To them her spontaneous assumption of the essential venality of every nation under the sun was not an insult. They were willing to sell their alliance and their aid to any Power that could efficiently protect them from vengeful consequences and would otherwise pay them most largely for it.

Such payment, in prospective, assumed naturally the form of territorial advantages and, in the present, that of subsidies in money and munitions. Germany from the first impressed Bulgaria, Rumania, and Greece as far more able in these respects than all of her opponents.

There was but one way to correct this view, and that was to prove to them by actual counter-demonstrations of physical power that it was erroneous.

Instead of that, France, Britain, and Russia assumed that a general scheme of territorial readjustment and augmentation, with liberal military subsidies incidentally bestowed, was all that was needed to induce them to march against the coalition of the Central Empires and Turkey.

Towards Serbia the course of the Triple Entente was unfair, ungenerous, deceptive. Serbia was led to believe that she could count upon greater succour from Britain and France than they were ever ready or even cheerfully disposed to give to her, until the very hour when they awakened to the fact that her utter perdition was imminent and that it would not only be extremely detrimental to themselves in the material sense, but would likewise cover them with everlasting shame and contempt. When that hour arrived, it was already too late to save Serbia from the fate of Belgium.

**Deeds should have spoken first. Aristide**

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Briand, one of the most brilliant statesmen of France, before he became Prime Minister for the third time, at the reconstruction of the Cabinet council, had warmly favoured the invasion of Austria-Hungary, through Serbia, with a large Franco-British force. The wisdom of such a step, from the strategic viewpoint, was obvious. From the diplomatic viewpoint it would have been doubly wise. A firm and adequate display of force in the Balkans on the part of the non-German allies, as later developments proved, would at once have dispelled the dread of German invincibility and have determined in their favour the diplomatic uncertainty which reigned there. The governments at London, Paris, and Petrograd committed the naïve mistake of placing words before deeds, in dealing with nations which are still primitive in their mental processes, and for whom deeds speak always most clearly and most loudly.

From the beginning, the Balkan states were under the spell of the German terror, which the failure of the Russian campaigns, the apparent deadlock on the French and Belgian fronts, and the success of the German submarine piracy deepened week by week. The diplomacy of the Allies was not of the sort to lessen this spell of terror. One of their first steps was to offer as a bribe to Bulgaria territory which was in part the property of Serbia and in part that of Greece. Poor Serbia was virtually "blackmailed," as an

eminent French publicist expressed it, 'into consenting to this transaction, for the alternative prospect of abandonment to her fate was held up to her, inferentially, if not directly. The Grecian Government conceived resentful ideas of the selfish animus of the non-Germanic Powers. All else that was promised either flatly or contingently to Bulgaria and Rumania was lands which were yet to be conquered.

**German diplomacy most eloquent in the Balkans.** German diplomacy made like offers for the aid of the Balkan states, but as alternatives were glimpses of ruthless invasion, butchery, and destruction, such as had befallen Belgium and northern France. This was language best understood at Sofia, at Athens, and at Bukarest. The diplomacy of the Triple Entente was construed in terms of egoism, weakness, and vacillation; that of the Dual Alliance in terms of brutal strength and inexorable resolve.

There came a change in the procedure of the Powers of the Entente in the Balkans, due to the shock produced by Bulgaria's pronouncement, and a vision of an Austro-Turco-German tide of conquest sweeping southward and south-eastward to Egypt and Persia and India. There was a new moral situation, relatively to the Asiatic millions of Mahometan faith. What doubtless the religious authority of the Kalif of Constantinople

<sup>1</sup> Yves Guyot.

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might not enkindle alone, the rumour of a great advancing host of co-religionists might easily set aflame. At that hour imperial Britain began to tremble for all that was greatest of her extraneous possessions, and France for her Moslem-peopled colonies. It was the real awakening which had come at last.

**Greek equivocation is challenged.** The Western Powers assumed a new tone towards Greece, whose attitude towards them was now of especially great moment, because through her territory only could they easily tender the helping hand to Serbia. It was sternly demanded of Greece that she put an end to all ambiguity as to her intentions regarding the expedition sent to succour the Serbs and other forces which were later to be landed. King Constantine saw himself powerless, for the time at least, to pursue his policy of passive aid to the Central Empires, without exposing himself to a danger which he could not prudently risk. It became obvious that popular impulse would carry Greece into the war, on the side of the non-German allies, if only they would give a convincing demonstration of their power and of their determined purpose to spare no sacrifice to rebut the Teutonic assault in the Balkans. Many Greeks were opposed to the nation taking part in the war because they were still haunted by the memory of the horrors that they had witnessed when the Bulgarians had last invaded the country. These

were mostly of the timid, shopkeeping, and bourgeois class. But the whole Greek people found themselves between two fears: that of the Germans and their allies, and that of Russia and the Western Powers. The German danger was drawing constantly nearer, it was true; but the Franco-British danger was already at their doors and even within their gates. The Greek Government was aware that these Powers would not brook any technical adherence to strict neutrality which involved the violation of its defensive treaty with Serbia. The effect, indeed, of the presence of the non-German force, constantly augmented by fresh debarkations, was almost magical. France and Britain reinforced their diplomatic arguments by the inferential threat of an embargo of Greek importations. It provoked almost a panic in the seaboard cities. Denys Cochin, the one representative of the party of the "Droite" in the French Ministry, and General Lord Kitchener, the British Minister of War, the latter returning from an inspection of the situation in Gallipoli, visited Athens and the King, and their presence awoke a most impressive popular manifestation in favour of the Quadruple Entente.

**Greece yields the Allies' general demands.** For the moment, all talk at Athens in support of the King's personal policy ceased. All the general demands of the Allies for the well-being and the protection of their expeditionary troops were



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quickly allowed. Reservations were cautiously made, however, by the Greek Government of certain questions of detail and minor questions of principle involving the technical maintenance of its sovereignty. The implied menace of the Greek army, largely concentrated in positions which commanded Salonika and the Franco-British camps, was to be removed, it was understood, by partial disbandment. The Allies were to be granted every reasonable liberty and every means which they required for the accommodation and movement of their forces. Such were the bases of the tentative accord between Greece and the Allies; but it did not become definitive as promptly as had been hoped. The superiority in numbers of the Austro-Germans and the Bulgars in Serbia and their progressive destruction of the power of the Serbs, whose main army, early in December, was cut off from the Allies and was in miserable retreat towards Albania, and the apparent precariousness of the position of the latter in the Stroumitza region, caused a deplorable impression in Greece and renewed vacillation on the part of the government. The great dread at that epoch was that the Serbs and the Allies would be driven across the new Macedonian frontier and that the Balkan War would be transferred to Greek soil. In this conjuncture the Bulgars, inspired from Berlin, delayed their advance upon Monastir, in order, it was inferred,

to flatter the Greeks with the hope that if Serbia were eventually stripped of her Macedonian acquisitions that ancient centre would come into their possession.

**Rumania between peace and war.** In Rumania, also, the new resolution and the new energy displayed by the Allies had had a certain quickening effect. The political element in favour of the war found itself morally strengthened in an important degree. Bratiano continued his attitude of impassibility; but the "benevolent" quality of Rumania's provisional neutrality, with respect to the non-Germanic Powers, became more marked. Fresh hopes were formed by the Allies of her speedy intervention on their side, in fulfilment of the engagement into which she had entered in June. Her army, nearly all of which had been for months on a war footing, guarded the frontiers in the direction of the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube River, where it divides Rumania from Bulgaria and Serbia. Austro-Hungarian war-craft were prevented from navigating the Danube below the point where it ceases to wash the Hungarian and Serbian soil. Freedom of communication with Russia was jealously preserved. Russia, in evidence of her faith in the loyalty and friendliness of Rumania's intentions, authorized the passage through her own territory, into that of the latter, of munitions and other provisions for war.

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In the meantime, Russia herself had concentrated an army of some 300,000 men between Odessa and the Bessarabian frontier, with the obvious purpose of moving to the relief of the Serbs, or of creating a diversion in their favour. These troops, admirably equipped and full of enthusiasm, were carefully reviewed by the Tsar. Russia asked of Rumania permission for the passage of her army across the latter's territory, either for the invasion of Bulgaria, or in order to fall upon the Bulgars and the Austro-Germans in Serbia.

**Italy signs the "London compact."** Italy, who had already taken part in naval operations against Bulgaria's Ægean coast, was preparing a land expedition into the Balkans. Although she had never made a technical declaration of war against Germany, she had now, rather tardily, followed the spontaneous example of Japan in signing the London compact, dated originally the 5th of September, 1914, whereby the members of the anti-Teutonic coalition pledged themselves not to make peace individually or separately with the common enemy or any member of the aggressive group of Powers, but only, at the last, a general and common peace, after the motives of combined resistance, in defence of justice and humanity, had been fully satisfied.



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